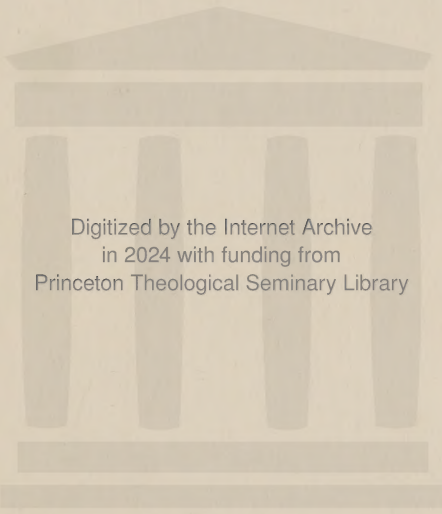


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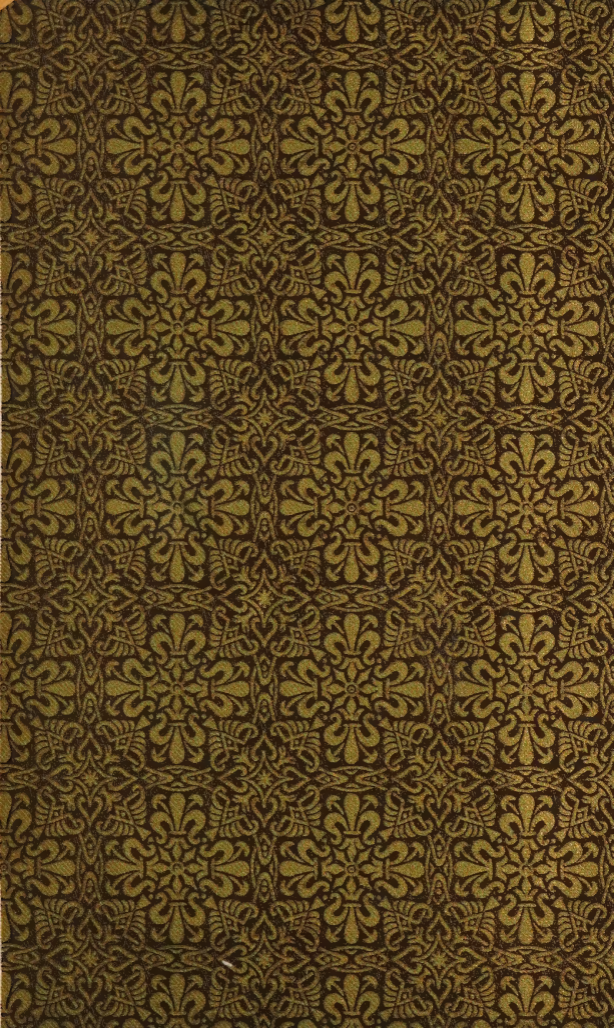
Francis, 1567-1622.

Introduction to the devout  
life



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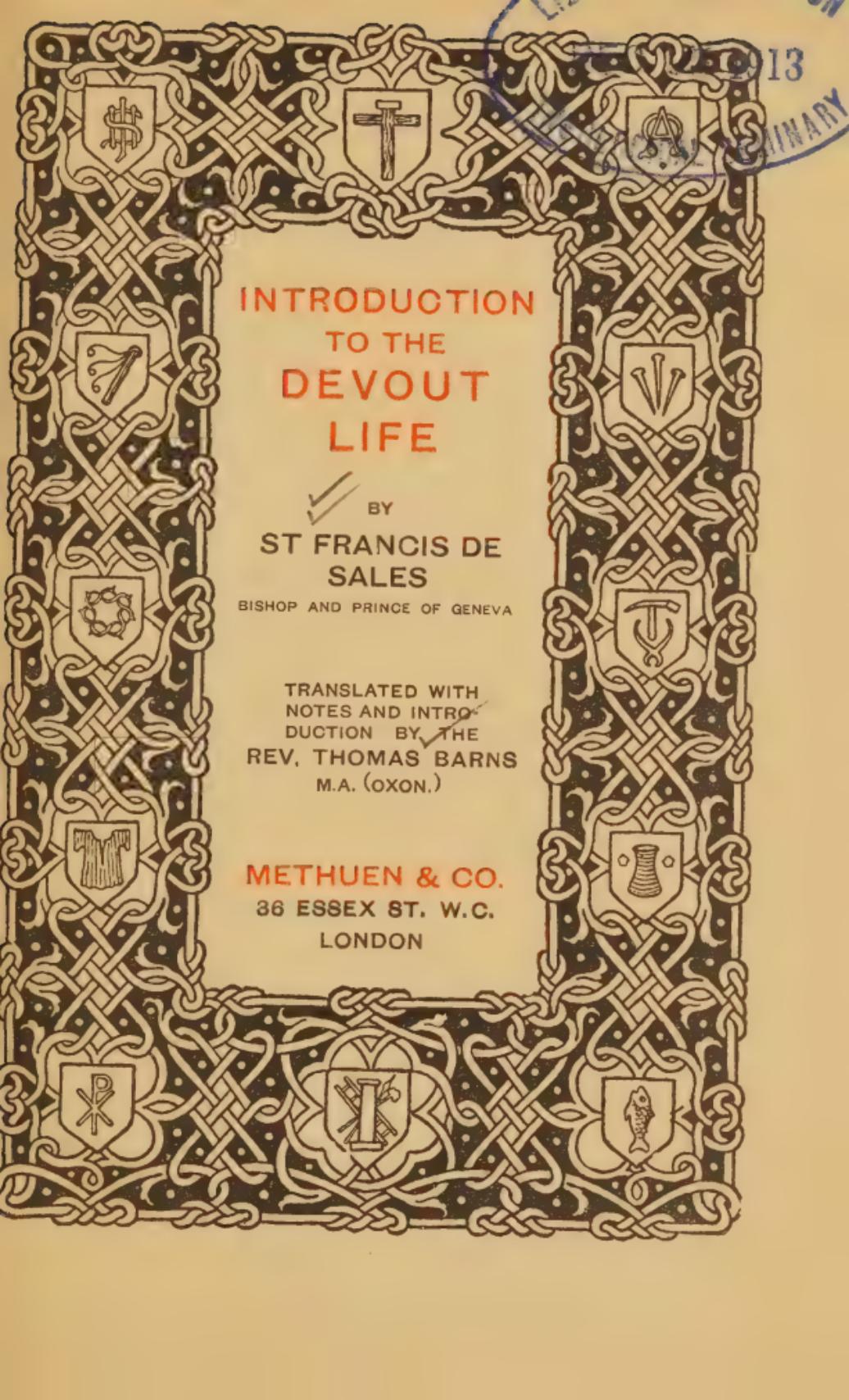








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INTRODUCTION  
TO THE  
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LIFE

✓ BY  
ST FRANCIS DE  
SALES

BISHOP AND PRINCE OF GENEVA

TRANSLATED WITH  
NOTES AND INTRO-  
DUCTION BY THE  
REV. THOMAS BARNES  
M.A. (OXON.)

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In piam memoriam

T. I. B.

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HILDERSTONE

IN VIGILIA S. MATTHIÆ APOSTOLI, 1905



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# INTRODUCTION

## I

1567

ST FRANCIS DE SALES was born in the Castle of Sales on Thursday, the 21st day of August 1567, in a room named after St Francis of Assisi. He was baptised on the following day in the parish church of St Maurice at Thorens.

He came of an ancient and noble lineage. Gerard of Sales was one of the principal officers in the court of Rudolph III., King of Burgundy, in the early part of the eleventh century. He was not only distinguished for his administrative powers, but also for his piety. In addition to the motto of the house of Sales, "*nec plus, nec minus*," he took for his own device the favourite words of his master, "*mundana, valet.*" His son Girin became a priest in the Benedictine monastery of Talloires on the Lake of Annecy, and he himself, perhaps on the death of Rudolph, retired from the world, and entered the house as a lay brother.

Rudolph III. died in 1033, and the Burgundian succession passed to the Emperor Conrad. Gerold, a Count of the old Burgundian kingdom, took possession of Geneva and its territory and held it as a fief of the Empire. The Counts of Geneva became more and more powerful, owing to the privileges which were

granted to them by the successors of Conrad. It was to check their independence that the Bishops of Geneva received from the Emperors the title and authority of prince. These privileges were finally confirmed by a Golden Bull of the Emperor Barbarossa in 1162, in which the Bishop Arduins de Faucigny was accorded the title of Prince of the Empire.

Gerold, the first Count of Geneva under the Empire, built the Castle of Thorens in the territory of Sales to protect the road from Geneva and La Roche to Annecy. He gave it to Odo of Compey. In the year 1060 this fortress was held as a fief by Odo or his son from Robert, Count of Geneva, and was thus confirmed to the house of Compey. In consequence of this settlement, the privileges of the Lords of Sales were encroached upon by the Lords of Thorens, and the feud between the two houses was the source of much litigation and bloodshed during the following centuries.

In the early years of the fifteenth century, the County of Geneva fell into the hands of the Duke of Savoy; Jean de Compey, Lord of Thorens, was appointed Chamberlain of the Duchy of Savoy and Governor (bailli) of the Genevan territory, and Jean de Sales was compelled to do homage to the Lord of Thorens. Some years later, when Louis, Duke of Savoy, entrusted the County of Geneva to his son, Janus, the Lord of Thorens alone refused to take the oath of fealty. His lands were confiscated, but were restored under certain conditions in 1472, only to be confiscated again in 1475 from Philibert his son, in consequence of some crime. They then came into the hands of Helena of Luxembourg, wife of the Count of Geneva, and brother to the Count of Luxem-

bourg-Martigues. The house is closely associated with the fortunes of the immediate ancestors of St Francis of Sales in the sixteenth century. His great-grandfather, Christophe de Sales, was brought up as a page in the court of Helena of Luxembourg, and afterwards entered the service of her brother the Count of Luxembourg-Martigues. He was entrusted with the administration of his estates.

Geneva had entered into an alliance with the Cantons of Fribourg and Berne in 1526 to defend her privileges against the encroachments of Charles, Duke of Savoy. This alliance with Berne led to the introduction of Protestantism into the city; but its triumph was due to the cowardice of the Bishop, Pierre de la Baume. He became bishop in 1523, but did not enter the city until forced to do so by Pope Clement VII. in 1526. He fled in 1528, and left the Catholics to struggle against the aggressive Protestantism of Farel and other Bernese preachers. He returned in 1533, but only for ten days, and on July 14th he fled hastily, to the despair and discomfiture of the cause of Catholicism in the city. It was at this crisis in the history of Geneva that the Duke of Savoy gave orders to François de Luxembourg, vicomte de Martigues, to suppress the revolt. Christophe de Sales and his son Jean were entrusted to carry out these orders.

The Bishop, when he tried to excuse himself to the Pope on the occasion of the marriage of Catherine de Medici to Henry at Marseilles in October of the same year, was rebuked in the words: "O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?" St Francis de Sales himself attributed the loss of Geneva to the cowardice of the Bishop: "If my predecessor, Pierre de la Baume, had remained in the city and had remained firm when the people were being carried

about with divers opinions, it would not have been perverted. He was a good prelate, and sincerely Catholic, but he lacked courage." The Protestant movement made rapid progress after the flight of the Bishop. On August 10, 1535, the celebration of the Mass was prohibited, and on the 25th the Chapter of the Cathedral removed to Annecy.

On the conquest of Savoy by Francis I. and the Bernese in 1536, Philibert of Compey, the hereditary enemy of the Lords of Sales, was restored to his lordship of Thorens, but was so impoverished that he had to beg for hospitality of his neighbour Christophe de Sales, in whose castle he died in 1528. Christophe de Sales survived him ten years, and died in 1548.

His son, Jean de Sales, grandfather of St Francis, distinguished himself in the service of the house of Luxembourg-Martigues. He was also conspicuous for his devout life. He observed the seven hours of prayer, and even when pressed by public affairs, would kneel down and say his office, and repeat the acts of faith, hope and charity. He died while crossing the Arve to attend Mass at the village church of Contamines, in 1558.

His second son, François de Nouvelles, the father of St Francis, shared the inheritance with his elder brother Louis. He was born in 1522, and was brought up as page in the household of Luxembourg-Martigues. He was an officer in the regiment of French cavalry commanded by the Duc d'Etampes, and took part in the treaty of Cateau-Cambrésis, in 1559, when Henry II. of France restored Savoy to Duke Emmanuel Philibert. In the same year, Sebastian de Luxembourg gave to the lords of Sales, Louis and François, the lands of Thorens, Richemont, and others, as a recognition of the services rendered

by them to his house. It was thus that Thorens, which had for five centuries been in the possession of the house of Compey, was united to the territory of Sales. François de Nouvelles himself received the barony of Thorens. In the following year, 1560, he made a contract of marriage with Françoise de Sionnaz, daughter of Melchior de Sionnaz and his wife Bonaventure, the Lady of Boisy. She received Boisy as her dower, and on the death of her brother became in full right Madame de Boisy. Monsieur de Nouvelles from the date of his marriage adopted the title of Monsieur de Boisy.

## II

1567-1579

THEIR eldest son, St Francis, was born on August 21, 1567. Madame de Boisy, who had already dedicated him to the service of God, especially before the Holy Shroud of Christ, brought him again to church to be blessed when he was weaned in 1569. His parents took the greatest care of him in his infancy, and it was remembered that his first words were: "God and my mother love me well." As a child he showed himself gentle to the poor, and used to teach the children the prayers he had learnt from his mother. A severe flogging at the hands of his father made a first act of pilfering his last, and under a firm and loving home discipline he learnt the first principles of obedience. He would lead his little friends round the font in the parish church, and recite with them the Gloria and the Apostles' Creed, teaching them that they ought to show this honour to the place where they had become children of God. He would also take them before the Blessed Sacrament, and make

enter the Jesuit College of Claremont. Madame de Boisy supported him in his request, and the father consented. In view of the long separation from home, Mons. de Boisy chose as his governor M. l'Abbé Déage, a man of great piety and judgment approaching to severity, yet of much prudence and learning.

Mons. de Villaroget, for such was the title by which he was now known, chose for his device "non excidet," resolving in no way to fall away from the nobility of grace and of birth which he enjoyed. He left Sales with the blessing of M. and Mme. de Boisy, and travelled to Paris by way of Lyons, Nevers, and Orleans.

He remained at Paris from 1579 to 1586. He at once began the course of Rhetoric, and by the advice of the Jesuit Fathers studied Greek under P. Jacques Sirmond. In obedience to his father's instructions he took lessons in dancing, riding and fencing. He made choice of a director, and continued the devotional exercises he had begun at Annecy. He joined the congregation of the Blessed Virgin, and became prefect of the confraternity. When he had completed the course of Rhetoric, he began the four years' course on Philosophy, which he studied under P. Jn. Fr. Suarez, and P. Jer. Dandini. His governor, the Abbé Déage, studied theology at the Sorbonne, and gave his notes to his pupil.

M. de Villaroget also attended the lectures of P. Gilbert Génébrard on Holy Scripture and Hebrew at the Collège Royal. The impressions made upon him by these lectures have left their mark on the "Introduction to the Devout Life." The lectures on the Song of Solomon gave him a love for this book, and not only inspired his own notes on it, but explain the frequent use made of it in his devotional writings.

Still more important is the high regard with which he learnt to regard the works of St Gregory Nazianzen. He quotes him again and again in the "Introduction." It is probable that Pope Gregory XIII. (1572-1585) took his title on account of his veneration for this great Father.<sup>1</sup> In 1580 he decorated the Cappella Gregoriana in St Peter's, and placed in it the body of the Saint. In 1582 a Latin edition of his works was prepared at Paris, with a dedicatory letter to Pope Gregory written by P. Gilbert G  n  brard.<sup>2</sup> This letter shows the high value set upon St Gregory's works at this time in Paris, in connection with the Calvinistic heresy. The writer regards this heresy as a revival of all the monsters of heresy which the "Theologian" tamed of old.<sup>3</sup> St Francis, with his knowledge of the ravages which this heresy was working around his own home, must have had the very greatest interest in its publication.

He also studied the works of St Augustine and St Thomas Aquinas, which he also refers to frequently in the "Introduction." It was at their feet that he made the declaration which he signed during the six weeks of desolation which he passed towards the close of his course at Paris. The trial passed away with the recital of the prayer: "Memorare, o piissima Virgo Maria," which he offered in the Church of St Etienne des Gr  s.

It is impossible to over-estimate the value of those six years of university life at Paris. His character

<sup>1</sup> Muratori, "Annali d'Italia," 1572.

<sup>2</sup> Printed in St Greg. Naz. Op., Cologne, 1680.

<sup>3</sup> "Calviniana pestis totam terrarum nostrarum orbem depasci conata, cuncta illa monstra, quae Theologus olim labore plusquam herculeo domuerat, et in orcum transmiserat, ex inferorum antro eduxit." Ep. G. Genebrardi ad. Greg. xiii.

He at once began to practise the rule of study which he had learnt at Paris. He gave four hours a day to Jurisprudence, which included canon and civil law, and four hours to theology. He studied law under the celebrated Guido Pancirolo, and theology under the Jesuit P. Possevin, whom he chose also as his spiritual director. He also pointed him out as future Bishop of Geneva.

St Francis always kept the Summa of St Thomas open on his desk as a guide in the study of Holy Scripture and the Fathers. He found special pleasure in the works of St Bonaventura, but studied also St Augustine, St Chrysostom, St Jerome, St Bernard, and St Cyprian. These studies in St Augustine and St Jerome, and the influence of the loving spirit of St Bernard and St Bonaventura have left their mark in the "Introduction to the Devout Life."

He persevered also in the discipline of humility and meekness which he had practised at Annecy and Paris. By some of his fellow students he was regarded as a coward, and on one occasion he drew his sword in proof of his courage. Others, again, endeavoured to ruin his virtue by leaving him in the presence of a woman who had been paid to tempt him. In token of his contempt and disgust at her conduct, he spat in her face, and thus exposed her to the scorn of her friends. These trials made him more and more strict in the observance of discipline, and the severity and austerity of his life brought him to the verge of death.

He completed his course in jurisprudence in September 1591, when he had just reached his twenty-fourth year. After a brilliant examination in the presence of the doctors of the University, he received the degree of Doctor in Laws from Guido

Pancirolo. The words addressed to him by his master show the esteem in which he was held. "I owe it to you to bear witness that your virtues are equal to your learning and that your heart is as pure as your spirit is enlightened. It is impossible to lose you without losing virtue." St Francis in reply thanked the bishop, the rector and the assembled doctors: "As for myself, I think it the greater and more glorious that this college has given me not only the crown, but the laurel of which it is composed; that is to say, that it has not only made me doctor, but has made me worthy of being so and of also bearing the title.

Pancirolo then invested him with the ring and the privileges of the University, and placing on his head the crown and the doctor's cap, said: "The University is pleased to find in you all the qualities of spirit and of heart which it can desire."

The five years spent by St Francis at Padua were years of intense activity at Rome. But the activity of Sixtus V. (1585-1590) was different from that of Gregory XIII. Gregory founded colleges to promote by learning the cause of the Church. Sixtus made use of armies and armadas to promote it by force.

Elizabeth of England was the one foe whom Sixtus feared. Her death would have placed Mary Queen of Scots on the throne, and secured the triumph of Catholicism through Europe. Elizabeth herself was indifferent as to this issue, and was fighting only for the greatness of England. She had no personal dislike of a Catholic succession, and felt that as long as Mary was alive she had a free hand in the politics of Europe. Burleigh thought otherwise, and forced her hand. The execution of Mary Queen of Scots in 1587 aroused the fury of the Pope. The Invincible

Armada was his design as much as that of Philip of Spain. Its destruction in 1588 not only ruined the supremacy of Spain on the high seas, but lost England for ever to the spiritual allegiance of Rome. The murder of the Guises turned the fury of Sixtus against France, and diverted Philip's attention from England. The assassination of Henry III. of France by Jules Clement in 1589 led Philip to give further support to the League against Henry IV. Paris suffered the horror of a long siege sooner than acknowledge the Huguenot King. These civil discords in France afforded the Duke of Savoy an opportunity of strengthening his own position in the Chablais against the Bernese, and of enlarging his own territory. He entered Marseilles in 1591, the year in which St Francis took his degree. Apart from the interest created by the struggle for the supremacy of Catholicism between Spain, France and England, the successes of Carlo Emmanuele in Savoy cannot fail to have stirred the national enthusiasm of M. de Villeroget.

But yet greater interests and greater influences were moulding his life. He had at Paris been almost completely associated with the Jesuits. In Padua he had chosen F. Possevin, a Jesuit, as his spiritual director and guide in the study of theology. But he was being drawn more closely to the Theatines. He attended the office in their church, and made the acquaintance of the Theatine Father Lorenzo Scupoli. From him in 1585 he received the copy of the "Spiritual Combat," "his dear book," which was his constant guide, and forms the groundwork of his own "Introduction to the Devout Life." The Theatine Order was pledged to poverty, and devoted itself to preaching and penitential work. It did not hold the world-wide political influence of the Jesuits.

The "Spiritual Combat" was to the Theatines what the "Spiritual Exercises" of St Ignatius were to the Jesuits, the rule and guide of spiritual life. It has less of that almost military preciseness which marks the spiritual exercises, and for this reason commended itself more to the sweetness and humility of St Francis. It is thus that the interests and experiences of his life at Padua were preparing him for his work in the guidance of the spiritual life.

## V

1591-1593

ST FRANCIS left Padua, October 2, 1591, and travelled by way of Ferrara, where the greatness of the House of Este was waning in the person of Alfonso II., to Rome. He visited the Seven Churches, and renewed his vows amid the memories of early Christianity and the monuments of its new life. The public works of Sixtus V. were then the wonder of all visitors to Rome, and Francis seems not only to have been impressed by them, but to have sympathised also with the spirit in which Sixtus had destroyed such noble works of antiquity as the Septizonium of Severus. "Alas! how vain are the works of man, when they are carried out with no regard to God!"

He visited S. Giovanni, where the palace, the north porch of the church, and the portico of the Scala Santa testified to the energy of Sixtus V. He visited the church of S. Pietro, the dome of which had only been completed in 1590, and the lantern under Gregory XIV., who died on October 15, at the very time at which Francis reached Rome. Here as well as at the Lateran and the Piazza del Popolo he saw the obelisks

newly erected by Sixtus V. He visited also the churches of S. Paolo Fuori, S. Lorenzo, S. Croce, and S. Sebastiano with its catacombs. In 1587 the Column of Trajan had been surmounted by the statue of St Peter, in 1589 the Antonine Column by the statue of St Paul. The hills of Rome, so long desolate for lack of water, were now again rendered habitable by the greatest of the works of Sixtus, the Aqua Felice. Rome, indeed, at this period was an inspiration of the new activity of the Church. The one anxiety was as to the succession in the Papacy. Innocent IX. was ruling Christendom from his couch, and the supremacy of Spain and the League was trembling in the face of the uncertainty of the next conclave. It was in the midst of this anxiety—an anxiety which Francis would appreciate the more that the supremacy of the Jesuits was then largely bound up with that of Spain—that Francis left Rome.

He visited Ancona, and again renewed his vows before the Holy House of Loretto. He narrowly escaped shipwreck and death on leaving Ancona. He stayed a short while at Cattolica, and then sailed in a felucca to Venice. An amusing incident occurred at Chioggia. He had lost his hat on the way, and under obedience to the strict discipline of M. Déage, was not allowed to make good the loss when he touched at Chioggia. With sword and nightcap, therefore, M. de Villaroget became the butt of the idlers of the piazza, who were as ready then as they are now to make innocent sport at the expense of a visitor. He spent some time in Venice studying its beauties; then, crossing to Padua, and saying farewell to his old friends there, he travelled through Verona, Mantua, Pavia, and Milan to Turin, and across Mt. Cenis to the Château of La Thuille.

Again he was received with the heartiest welcome by M. and Mme. de Boisy and their neighbours. The Lordship of Villaroget was formally conferred on him, and his father began at once to carry out his plans for his son's career. He had already in anticipation formed a valuable library at La Thuille. But before securing him a position at Chambéry, he sent him to Annecy on a visit to Claude de Granier, the Bishop of Geneva. This visit was of great importance, for it brought Francis under the notice of the Bishop and his cousin, Louis de Sales, who was Canon of the Cathedral at Annecy. The Bishop had already made many reforms, introducing the revised breviary of Trent, and instituting a "conours" or examination on the appointment to a new benefice. He was much interested in the account which Francis gave of his studies in law and theology, and of his visit to Rome, where Clement VIII. had since his departure been elected Pope. He invited him to be present at a "conours," and asked him to state his opinion on a point of theology which was under discussion. He was so impressed with the cleverness of St Francis that he said afterwards, "What do you think of this young noble? He will become a pillar of the Church, and will succeed me in the Bishopric!"

On his return home, he was told by his father that he was to be appointed advocate to the Senate of Savoy. He left for Chambéry in company with M. Déage, and on his arrival presented his letters of introduction to the Senator, M. Antoine Favre, who was an old friend of the family. He made the same impression on M. Favre and on the President M. Pobel, that he had made on the Bishop at Annecy, and on November 24, 1592, he was proclaimed advocate to the Senate.

M. de Boisy was much pleased with his son's reception at Chambéry, and considered the time was ripe for opening negotiations for his marriage with Mlle. de Suchet de Mirebel, only daughter of the Seigneur de Vegy. Francis, however, though he visited her at Sallanches, was firm in his resolution, and confided to the parish priest of Thuille, Amé Bouvart, that his sole desire was to enter the ecclesiastical profession. He also took his cousin, Canon Louis de Sales, into his confidence. In the following year the Baron d'Hermance arrived from Turin with letters patent from the Duke of Savoy, conferring the dignity of Senator in the Senate of Chambéry upon M. de Villaroget. It was a high honour, and one which his father desired him much to accept. Francis was told that it need not be an obstacle to his vocation, and that several eminent ecclesiastics were among the Senators. He refused, however. "I could not divide myself between God and the world. I wish to be an ecclesiastic, nothing else!"

It was a season of great trial to Francis, and to M. and Mme. de Boisy. Francis had a high regard for his father's wish. His father looked to him to build up the fortunes of the family. His mother in her heart favoured her son's purpose, because it was in keeping with her own vows and with his. His cousin, Louis de Sales, was at last able to provide means for winning the consent of M. de Boisy. The provostship of the Chapter of the Cathedral of Geneva fell vacant in the spring of 1593. Louis de Sales suggested his cousin's name to the Bishop, who gladly supported the idea. The presentation was in the hands of the Pope. But there was no difficulty in obtaining it from Clement VIII. and the Bulls arrived at Annecy in May 1593. Canon Louis de Sales had little doubt

that the dignity of the provostship, which was second only in rank to the Bishop, would win the consent of M. de Boisy. He forwarded the Bulls to M. de Villaroget, who knew nothing of his plans. In company with a brother Canon, Francis de Ronys, and St Francis, he sought an interview with M. de Boisy. St Francis pleaded his cause, and referred to the vows of chastity and dedication to the service of God which he had made at Paris, Padua, and Loretto. The Canon then produced the Bulls. M. de Boisy was at first overwhelmed with grief: "What is the provostship compared to the high position which your talents give you a right to expect in the world?" He felt it hard that he, his eldest son, the staff of his old age, should forsake him on the edge of the grave. St Francis endeavoured to prove to him that the duties of his office would not take him from his family. He promised to look after his brothers. At last, when Mme. de Boisy also supported St Francis in his request, the old man said: "Well, my son, since you assure me that God has inspired you with this resolution, I take you at your word. Do as the Lord demands of you. It is not for me to resist His adorable will." He then gave him his blessing. "Blessed be the Lord," cried St Francis, "who has this day granted me what I have so long desired. Blessed be thou, my dear father, for thus giving me so great a witness of thy tender love."

This happened on May 12, 1593. The two canons returned to Annecy and caused the Bulls to be published. Francis at once relinquished the dress and title of M. de Villaroget and received the ecclesiastical habit from the hands of M. Bouvard, parish priest of La Thuille. He took the name of Francis de Sales, but was known in his family and in the town as the

Provost. At the Chapter of May 26, Francis presented the Bulls, and exhibited the letters in proof of his degree of doctor. He was then installed as Provost by the senior canon, Jean Tissot. He then thanked the Chapter in a Latin speech.

The Bishop told him to prepare for ordination at Trinity. He went into retreat with M. Bouvard at the Château of Sales, and received minor orders on June 8. On June 12, the Saturday before Trinity Sunday, he was ordained sub-deacon. The Bishop entertained the whole of the family de Sales at dinner on Trinity Sunday, and then ordered him to preach in the Cathedral at the Festival of Corpus Christi. St Francis pleaded that he was only a sub-deacon. "I wish it," said the Bishop, "and I give you a dispensation to do it." The sermon was preached on the Octave, and Francis received the congratulations of the Bishop and of M. and Mme. de Boisy.

His learning and his sympathy won the confidence of all. He at once determined to do something to arouse the religious instincts of the people, for the Church of the diocese of Geneva was groaning under the desolation of Calvinism. He formed for this purpose, even as a sub-deacon, the confraternity of the Holy Cross at Annecy, and drew up the rules and constitutions under the authority of the Bishop. It was formally instituted on Sept. 1, 1593, and M. de Boisy was one of the first to join. The devotional exercises of the confraternity were begun on Sept. 14, the Exaltation of the Holy Cross, and the Bishop himself presided. On the 18th, St Francis was ordained deacon, and was told to prepare himself for his ordination to the priesthood at Advent. He was ordained priest on December 18, 1593, and then Bishop Claude de Granier, who was melted to tears

at the devotion of St Francis, said: "God has not granted me the gift of speech, but He has given me my son de Sales, who will be my speech and my voice."

He then went into retreat for three days, and on St Thomas's Day, 1593, celebrated his first Mass in the Cathedral Church of St Francis of Annecy. M. and Mme. de Boisy, and the Senator Antoine Favre, were among those who received the Holy Communion at his hands. He preached on Christmas Day and the following Sunday, and by his simplicity of style won the attention of his hearers. He set aside the custom of Greek and Latin quotations, and kept in view only the greater glory of God and the salvation of men.

## VI

1593-1598

THE Provost devoted himself at once to the labours of the priestly life. When at Annecy, he spent whole mornings hearing confessions on the Gospel side of the Cathedral, near the door, and his zeal and skill was so appreciated that not only did M. and Mme. de Boisy seek his ministrations, but the Chapter appointed him to the office of Grand Penitentiary. Thus early in his priesthood he gained experience in the direction of souls. He was also tireless in his preaching. His sermons were so simple, yet so full of learning and forcible in argument, that the Calvinists at once recognised him as a formidable protagonist of the Catholic religion. "You preach too often," his father once said: "I hear the bell ringing for sermon on week-days, and when I ask who is preaching, I am always given the same answer: It is the Provost, the Provost."

M. de Boisy feared he would lose the position which he wished him to hold in the world as well as in the Church. He urged him again to accept the senatorship of Chambéry. "I cannot serve two masters." "Go in peace," said his father, "be it as thou wilt. God wishes thee to occupy thyself in His service. I ought to submit to His will."

The revenues of the Chapter had been so reduced on their withdrawal from Geneva, that the canons had to hold a benefice in addition to their canonries. The Provost, having exhausted his own income, applied for the benefice of Petit Bornand in the mountains of Faucigny. He entered his name for the concours or examination, and in the absence of other candidates, took as his thesis before the Bishop and clergy the doctrine of the Blessed Sacrament. He was instituted to the benefice after some litigation which was settled in his favour before the Senate of Chambéry.

Thus in the midst of his family and his friends he ministered at Annecy and the neighbourhood during the spring and summer of 1594. In the autumn he was called to dedicate himself to a far more dangerous and difficult task, which occupied the next few years of his life, and drew out not only his sympathy and zeal for the salvation of souls, but also his administrative power. The Chablais had until 1536 been in the possession of the Duke of Savoy. It lay between the mountains of Faucigny and the Lake of Geneva. The Catholic religion was established east of the Drance under the rule of Valais. The Calvinism of Berne and Geneva had stamped it out between the Drance and Geneva. The endowments had been seized, the churches destroyed, and the clergy banished at the Bernese conquest in 1536. In 1564, on the restoration of peace between France and Savoy, Emmanuel

Philibert had obtained by the negotiations of M. de Boisy the restoration of a part of the Chablais, without, however, being able to interfere with the Protestant settlement. The Duke instituted the military order of St Maurice and St Lazarus for the defence of the country, and endowed it with Church property on the condition that an annual revenue of 50 ducats should be given to each parish as soon as the Catholic religion could be restored. This settlement was annulled in 1589, when the Bernese, on the renewal of the quarrel between France and Savoy, again invaded the district. Charles Emmanuel met the invasion in force, drove out the Bernese, and signed the treaty of Nyon, by which freedom of religion was established. The last hopes of the Bernese seemed lost by the abjuration of Henry IV. of France in 1593, and the Duke wrote to the Bishop of Geneva asking him to take measures for the restoration of the Catholic religion. Claude de Granier selected Thonon, on the Lake of Geneva, the capital of the Chablais, as the centre of the mission, and appointed François Bouchut as parish priest. In 1594 the people of Thonon destroyed the fortress, and showed such hostility that Bouchut withdrew to Annecy, and informed the Bishop that the condition of the country rendered mission work amongst the Calvinists impossible.

The Bishop summoned the Chapter, and asked their advice. The Provost, as the senior member, was the first to speak. "Monseigneur, if you judge me worthy and order me to undertake this mission, I am ready to obey, and shall think myself happy in your choice. *In verbo tuo laxabo rete.*" The Bishop had already felt that Francis was the one member of the Chapter who could carry the work through, and accepted his offer with thankfulness. It was a new

trial for M. de Boisy. He had already conceded much. He rode over at once from the Castle of Sales and refused his consent. The mission meant to him failure, if not certain death. He had had experience of the stubborn obstinacy of the Calvinists. He had lived among them at Brens, and had had negotiations with them. He had seen the Chablais change masters many times. European politics were still so unsettled that there was no permanence in the present settlement. The Bernese might regain possession. France might again become Protestant. The Duke indeed had expressed a wish for the restoration of the Catholic religion, but he had made no provision for the work. The people would be quick to see that he had as yet little heart in it, and that the effort was merely tentative. The risk and the danger and the uncertainty were too great. Politics and religion were so entangled in this "century of iron" that experience and prudence forbade the risk. The Bishop was overcome by the old man's appeal. But Francis would not draw back. "Would you make me unworthy of the kingdom of God?" "My son," said M. de Boisy, "I have often received your blessing at the Mass, at Confession, and at your Sermons. But be assured that your undertaking will never have my blessing or consent."

St Francis chose his cousin, Canon Louis de Sales, as his only companion. He wished to enter upon his work quietly and to feel his way. The two cousins made their preparations at once. They took only their breviary, their Bible, and the Controversies of Bellarmine. The Bishop gave them his blessing, and entrusted them with the necessary letters. They left Annecy, September 9, 1594, and spent a few days in retreat at Sales. They made a general confession on

the 13th, and strengthened themselves in humility and fixity of intention to combat the pride and obstinacy of the heretics. M. de Boisy made a last effort to break down the firm purpose of his son: "Provost, your zeal is great, but you entirely lack prudence. You do not understand the difficulty of this undertaking." "My dear father, God will provide. It is He who sustains the warrior whom He sends forth to battle. What if we had been sent to England or India? The Lord protects the path of them who seek to do His will." They started early the following day, the 14th, the Exaltation of the Holy Cross, on foot, without servant, money, or provision. The old man showed his resentment to the end, and refused even to say farewell before they left. There is indeed something heroic in the strong and hard purpose which drove the father to such sternness for love of his son, and the son to such a sacrifice for the love of God.

They reached the Castle of Allinges near Thonon the same night, and presented their papers to the Governor, Baron d'Hermance. He welcomed them and advised them to make the Castle their headquarters. The next day they visited the "procureur-fiscal" and the "syndics" of Thonon. At first their ministrations were confined to the Catholics of Thonon and the neighbouring villages. The news of the mission at once reached Geneva, and the Protestant authorities endeavoured to check it by force. More than one attempt was made to murder the Provost, and M. de Boisy again bade his son peremptorily to give up the work. Francis, however, persevered, preaching through the winter with no results. The Protestants were forbidden to attend his sermons. He therefore wrote a series of tracts which were passed from hand to hand among them. They treated on the mission of

the Church, the authority of Holy Scripture, the doctrine and ministry of the Sacraments, and other subjects in controversy between the Catholics and the Calvinists. Further efforts were made by M. Favre and M. de Boisy to induce the Bishop to recall him. The old man wrote: "It is tempting God to make a longer trial. These people must be forced to receive the faith at the cannon's mouth." But Claude de Granier left the last word to the Provost, and St Francis held his ground firmly during these first nine months, hindered at every point by the Protestant leaders, unsupported by the Duke, and discouraged by his father.<sup>1</sup>

In May 1595, he went to Annecy for the Festival of Corpus Christi. In his meditations before the Blessed Sacrament he received new strength and resolution. "Lord, restrain the flood of Thy grace! Depart from me, for I cannot bear the torrent of Thy consolations." He was also refreshed in the society of his friends. He now enjoyed the companionship of his faithful servant, Georges Rolland. On his return to Thonon in June, he renewed his work with more heart. His heroic courage was beginning to impress the people of the Chablais, and to impress even the Protestants. In July they began to attend his preaching, and further desperate attempts were made on his life. It was in this month that Pope Clement accepted

<sup>1</sup> The following little note is dated April 19, 1595:—"Amor meus, furor meus. Mon amour est toute ma fureur. Il me semble, en effet, que mon zèle se soit changé en une fureur pour mon Bien-aimé; et je dois redire souvent ces petits vers:—

Est-ce l'amour ou la fureur  
Qui me presse, O divin Sauveur?  
Oui, mon Dieu, ce sont tous les deux:  
Car je brûle quand je vous veux."

the abjuration of Henry IV. of France and gave him absolution, and the clearing of the political atmosphere aided St Francis in his work. He left Allinges, and took up his residence in the house of Mme. du Foug at Thonon, where he again narrowly escaped assassination by concealing himself in some secret hiding-place. The work of conversion now began to make rapid progress. He celebrated daily at the Church of Marin across the Drance. He communicated the Catholics at Allinges with the reserved Sacrament. In the winter of 1595 and 1596, the second winter of the mission, he began to preach publicly in the market-place at Thonon. The Calvinistic minister, Louis Viret, tried to make light of his preaching. The Protestants urged Viret to meet the arguments of the Provost, and to arrange for a conference. Baron d'Avully, the bulwark of Protestantism in the Chablais, gave his support to this arrangement. The day was fixed, and St Francis was ready, but the ministers drew back at the last. This cowardice of the ministers, and their inability to agree over the articles of their belief, led the Baron d'Avully to reconsider his own position. He had frequent interviews with Francis, and was won over by him to the position of the Catholic Church. He wished, however, before finally abjuring Protestantism, to hold a conference himself with the leading ministers of Berne and Geneva.

Meanwhile another prominent layman, the advocate Pierre Poncet, made a public abjuration of his errors at Thonon on April 20, 1596. Baron d'Avully, after waiting some time for a reply to his challenge, concluded from the silence of the ministers that they were unable to defend their opinions. He therefore made a general confession to St Francis, and on October 4, 1596, in

the presence of the leading people of Geneva and the Chablais, made a public refutation of the errors of Calvin. These conversions were the turning-point in the history of the mission. The Genevan minister La Faye endeavoured to unsettle d'Avully, and promised to come himself to Thonon and refute the arguments of St Francis in his presence. But he failed like the others to fulfil his promise. D'Avully and the Provost then visited La Faye at Geneva, and at the conclusion of their discussion La Faye took refuge in insult and broke off the meeting.

The friendship of M. Favre was a source of comfort to Francis during those two anxious years. He had visited the Provost at Thonon. He had done what he could to allay the anxiety of M. de Boisy. He feared indeed that he was only casting pearls before swine, but yet he encouraged him and cheered him. In 1596, when the promise was brighter, he wrote: "Go on as you have begun. You will have not only as witnesses but still more as admirers of your courage and your virtue, those whom you were not able to have as your protectors."

The success of the mission was reported to the Duke of Savoy, and Francis was requested to draw up a statement as to the best means of continuing the work. He did not hesitate to say that for two years the mission had been supported at his own expense, and that if further progress was to be made, the Duke must show publicly his interest in it by affording means for carrying it on. His labours were also brought before the notice of Pope Clement VIII. who, in a brief under date October 1, 1596, wrote: "*Dilecte fili, salutem et apostolicam benedictionem. Narravit nobis vir religiosus frater Spiritus, ex ordine capucinatorum, verbi Dei concionator, de tua pietate et zelo divini*

honoris, quod pergratum nobis accidit." He charged him to strive further for the conversion of Theodore de Beza, the great Calvinistic Doctor at Geneva.

St Francis was summoned to Turin in November 1596. He crossed the Alps with some difficulty and was received by the Duke and the Papal Legate in Council. His demands show that his capacity for organisation was as great as his zeal for the salvation of souls. Eight preachers were required, with an income of 100 gold crowns (£14) a year. It was impossible to restore all the churches. Parishes must be united. Fifteen or sixteen must be formed, each with a parish priest (*curé*) and an assistant curate (*vicaire*). The parish priest would need for himself, for the maintenance of the assistant curate, and for the occasional entertainment of the itinerant preachers, the sum of 160 crowns (£23). Thonon, as the centre of the mission, must have Divine service rendered with all solemnity. The parish priest would need six priests to assist him, and a stipend of 400 crowns (£56). Before all, the cost which had been already incurred, 200 crowns (£28), must be paid. A Jesuit college should be founded at Thonon. A Catholic consistory, after the model of the Calvinist consistory, for the administration of Church discipline, should be formed, of which the president should be a preacher chosen by the Bishop, and the counsellors should be half clerical and half lay. The Duke's representative should be amongst the latter. These were the pressing needs. There remained the fact that in the Chablais alone, fifty-two parishes lay desolate, without counting the abbeys, priories, convents and chapels. Most of the property had been appropriated by the Bernese. But some portion had been granted to the military order of St Maurice and St Lazarus, of which the

Duke was Grand Master. The time had come that some of this should revert to the Church.

The Duke gave the necessary letters to St Francis, one under date December 9, 1596, addressed to the inhabitants of Thonon, exhorting them to make use of the instructions of the Catholic teachers.

St Francis crossed the Little St Bernard, and returned to Thonon. He at once began to restore the Church of St Hippolyte, though he placed in it an altar of wood out of deference to the hostility of the syndics. He appointed Pierre Monjonier to the united parishes of Allinges and Mezingue and sent his cousin Louis de Sales to take charge of Brens, of which he was also temporal lord. During the Lent of 1597 he said Mass and preached daily at Thonon, his activity being contrasted with the one weekly sermon of M. Viret. In Easter week he visited Geneva, and ministered privately to the Catholics in that city, communicating them with the reserved sacrament.

The work of conversion and consolidation made rapid progress during the year 1597. In a letter to the Papal Nuncio at Turin, February 19, he writes: "The news which is spreading concerning the peace gives us reason to hope that we are on the eve of gathering what we have been sowing up to now." There had always been the danger during the war with France that Henry IV. might throw the Bernese into the Chablais. This had been the chief ground of M. de Boisy's objection to the mission and of the anxiety of Francis de Sales. The removal of this anxiety had considerable influence in 1597 in promoting the cause of the Catholic religion. Farther appointments were made at Bons, at S. Cergues, at Gvoire, and at Bellevaux, a village high up in the valley of the Breven. In all this work St Francis was supported

by the Baron d'Avully. He also, in accordance with the wishes of Clement VIII. had three interviews with Theodore of Beza, but though he won from him the admission that there was salvation in the Church of Rome, as being the mother Church, he confesses in his report to the Pope that his heart was as unmoved as a stone.

In the summer the Provost attended a Synod at Annecy, and obtained the further help of a Jesuit father, and two Capuchins, Fr. Cherubino and Fr. Esprit de Baume. With their help and the permission of the Duke, he arranged the Festival of the Forty Hours at Annemasse, a small town only a league from the gates of Geneva. He thought it a fitting occasion to show the new forces of the Church in the near neighbourhood of this stronghold of Protestantism. The festival was fixed for September 7, 1597. The Bishop consented to preside in person. On the Saturday the Catholics of Thonon went in procession to Annemasse, singing the *Vexilla Regis*, Georges Rolland carrying the cross. They were met outside Annemasse by the Brothers of the Holy Cross of Annecy. Large numbers gathered from all parts and each procession fulfilled its solemn hour of adoration before the Blessed Sacrament. Religious plays were acted, composed by Canon Louis de Sales, and in them the Provost himself took part. He and Fr. Cherubino preached frequently during the Forty Hours. The cross of St Philibert, on the high road to Geneva, was restored, and the following inscription was placed on it:—

“ Ce n'est la pierre ni le bois  
Que le Catholique adore,  
Mais le Roi, qui, mort en Croix  
De Son Sang la Croix honore ”

The impetuosity of the Capuchins led to some trouble at Thonon. They not only obtained the Church of St Hippolyte for the sole use of the Catholics, but claimed also the exclusive use of the great bell. In their endeavour to secure control of the belfry by main force, they stirred up so strong a feeling of resentment that, notwithstanding their precautions, the Protestants succeeded in destroying the bell. St Francis was frequently absent from Thonon, and much of the work now fell to the Jesuit and Capuchin preachers. He was at Annecy in the winter, and at the outbreak of the plague in January 1598 he was himself nearly at the point of death. On his return to Thonon he found the Jesuit college in full work, and was especially attracted by the learning and devotion of Fr. Ferrier, who became his intimate friend and confessor.

The death of the Infanta Catherina, daughter of Philip II. of Spain and wife of the Duke Carlo Emmanuele in November 1597, and the Treaty of Vervins, March 2, 1598, between Henry IV. of France and Philip of Spain, still further helped to the settlement of the religious trouble in the Chablais. It was determined to celebrate the Forty Hours at Thonon. The Bishop of Geneva again presided. Sacred plays were arranged in an open-air theatre. The Church of St Augustine was reconciled, and the Protestants driven into a smaller one. The Duke was unable to be present, as he was obliged to visit his old province of Breven, which he was exchanging for the Saluzzone territory. The visit was a short one, and the Festival was repeated on October 1, in the presence of the Duke of Savoy and the Papal Legate, Alexander De Medici, who was on his way from Vervins to Rome. The Bishop met the Duke

at the head of the Protestants of Thonon, and obtained for them a free pardon for their rebellion in 1594. The Duke introduced St Francis to the Legate: "Monseigneur, this priest is the true apostle of the Chablais. He it was who entered the country almost alone at the peril of his life, and saved the word of God. I have seconded the undertaking with my sword, but all the glory of this good work is due to this zealous missionary." Sir Francis was so overwhelmed by this public recognition of his labours that he bid Fr. Cherubino preach at the opening services. He conducted the last procession to the Blessed Sacrament and preached the closing sermon. In the midst of the Festival, the last Protestant ministers of the Chablais, Louis Viret and Jean Clerc, left Thonon and withdrew to Geneva. The victory of the Church and of the Cross was complete.

## VII

1598-1602

IN the autumn of 1598, Claude de Granier determined to appoint a coadjutor. The progress of the Catholic religion in the diocese of Geneva, and his own advancing years, made it needful for the welfare of the Church. He passed over the Abbé de Chissé, his nephew and Vicar-General, whose administrative ability pointed him out for the office, and obtained letters patent from the Duke of Savoy, dated May 29, 1598, for the nomination of Francis de Sales. The solemnity of the Forty Hours at Thonon prevented him from giving effect to these letters patent. The Act of Settlement by which the Catholic religion was established and heresy suppressed was signed Nov. 12, 1598. The

Duke left Thonon and the Bishop returned to Annecy. He at once sent for the Provost and begged him to act as Coadjutor. Francis refused. The Bishop then visited the Château de Sales, and pressed his request with the help of M. and Mme. de Boisy. The Provost again refused, and the appointment was again delayed.

Meanwhile the Duke received a letter from the King of France stating that the city of Geneva was included in the Treaty of Vervins, and that any hostile action against it would be regarded as a breach of the treaty. This shut out all hope of restoring the Catholic religion in the city. The Bishop had hitherto hoped that the time was approaching when the Chapter of Annecy would be restored to their rights. He determined with the Duke's permission to send the Provost on an embassy to Pope Clement to receive if possible a modification of the treaty. Francis had a final interview with the Duke, and received from him a letter signifying his consent to the restoration of Church property held by the Knights of St Maurice and St Lazarus. The Duke asked him if he had any personal report to make. Francis would not even ask for the payment of the expenses incurred during the Chablais mission. "The Provost de Sales," said the Duke, "is the father and apostle of the Chablais. If God would give to His Church a certain number of soldiers as valiant, as zealous, as devoted as he is, the earth would change her appearance. But we do not deserve it."

The Bishop made a final appeal to Francis to accept the office of Coadjutor. He sent his Almoner, the Abbé Critain, to the Château de Sales to place the matter before the Provost as an act of obedience. The Abbé showed him the letters patent of the Duke, and a letter

from the Cardinal de Medici, and proved to him that the nomination was supported by all the force of spiritual, civil and paternal authority. "Let us go to the Church of Thorens," said the Provost, "and let each of us say the Mass of the Holy Ghost. I will serve at yours, and you will serve at mine, and we will do what the Lord inspires." When they were over St Francis spent some time in prayer, and then said to the Abbé: "You will tell the Bishop that the thought of the burden of the episcopal office has always made me afraid, but, since he wishes it and orders it, I am ready to obey."

St Francis returned to Annecy to receive his final instructions for the mission to Rome, but was seized with fever, and for some weeks was dangerously ill. He started in February 1599 in company with the Abbé de Chissé, who was entrusted with the letter to the Pope concerning the nomination to the coadjutorship. The Bishop guaranteed the income of 480 ducats (£132) from the canonry, the living of Petit Bornand, and a charge on his own revenues. They travelled by way of Turin and Modena, and reached Rome early in March. The Provost and the President Favre, who was also on a mission connected with the Este claim on Ferrara, stopped at an inn near S. Salvatore in Lauro. The two friends at once visited St Peter's and prayed before the Confession of St Peter. On March 14, the Provost and the Abbé were presented to the Pope by the Cardinal de Medici. They delivered the letters referring to the city of Geneva and the religious settlement of the Chablais, and a petition from the Chapter of Annecy requesting permission to be transferred to Thonon. In a second audience the Provost presented a letter from the Bishop excusing himself from a visit to

Rome, and asking that Francis might be his representative at the threshold of the Apostles.

The Abbé obtained a special audience on March 15, and supported the Bishop's request for the appointment of Francis as Coadjutor of Geneva. On the 20th the Pope expressed his approval to Francis, and told him to be ready for the examination on the 22nd. Savoy enjoyed the privilege of exemption from this examination, and Francis before giving his consent consulted the Ambassador of Savoy. Clement at once recognised the privilege, but at the same time desired that the examination should take place. On the morning when it took place, the Provost entered the Church of S. Giacomo on his way to the Vatican, and prayed that he might be covered with confusion if it was not God's will that he should receive the office of a Bishop. The examination was a brilliant success. He was given the choice of civil law, canon law, or theology, and chose the last as most fitting for his office. Among his examiners were Cardinal Frederigo Borromeo, Cardinal Baronius, the author of the "Annales," Cardinal Borghese, afterwards Paul V., and the great controversialist, Fr. Bellarmine. The Pope at the end of the examination said to the assembled court: "No one whom we have hitherto examined has given us such complete satisfaction." He won the friendship of Bellarmine and Fr. Juvenale Ancina. Baronius gave him the last published volume of his "Annales"—volume viii.

On March 24, the Pope issued Letters Apostolic under the seal of the Fisherman relating to the religious settlement of the Chablais. In another brief, he appointed Francis de Sales Coadjutor of Geneva, *cum jure successionis*, and preconised him with the title of Bishop of Nicopolis. Francis forgot to ask

for the Bulls of consecration or to leave the money for them. "I had the best reason in the world for not leaving any money, for I had none to leave. If God wishes me to be Bishop, the Bulls will be sent." On Lady Day he received the Blessed Sacrament at the hands of Clement VIII. He also said Mass in St Peter's. After a last interview with the Pope, he left Rome on March 31.

On his return journey he again visited Loretto. At Bologna he was received with great honour by the Archbishop. At Milan, he bought the "Life of S. Carlo Borromeo," which was just published. He reported the result of the mission to the Duke at Turin, and begged him to put no hindrance in the way of executing the papal brief as to the restoration of Church property, and reminded the Knights of the Order of St Maurice and St Lazarus that the need of the salvation of souls was the only point they ought to consider. He was received at Annecy with the acclamations of the people, the Abbé de Chissé having published the brief of the Pope. The Bulls of consecration were expected daily, and the Bishop looked forward to his early consecration. Francis expressed a hope that the great honour might be put off as long as possible. In fact throughout the life of the Bishop, for nearly two years and a half, he enjoyed the title of Bishop-coadjutor without receiving episcopal orders.

He at once devoted himself to the re-establishment of the Church in the Chablais. It was found impossible to remove the Cathedral Chapter to Thonon. The Coadjutor therefore carried out another plan for strengthening the work of the Church. The Catholics were exposed to great temptation in their visits to the Protestant towns of Lausanne and Geneva,

These towns were their chief markets and centres of education. Francis instituted a religious establishment at Thonon which should be at once a university and a mission centre, and also to some extent a market which would make the visits to Lausanne unnecessary. The scheme was approved by the civil and ecclesiastical authorities, and was constituted by a Bull of Pope Clement, September 13, 1599.

A Prefect and seven secular priests were to be at the head of this Holy House, or Sainte-Maison of Thonon. They were to observe the rules of the oratory of St Philip Neri, and were to enjoy the privileges of the universities of Bologna and Padua. Cardinal Baronius was appointed as first Protector under the Holy See, and the Coadjutor as first Prefect. The foundation consisted of four parts. The secular priests took the pastoral oversight of the town of Thonon, and the parish church of St Hippolyte, now to be called Notre Dame de Compassion. The second part consisted of mission preachers, and was entrusted to the Capuchin Fathers. The third part took charge of public instruction, and was entrusted to the Jesuits, the Pope himself defraying the cost of five hundred crowns. At his death they withdrew, and in 1616 the Barnabite Fathers took their place. The fourth part consisted of the new converts, and was to some extent a labour settlement, where the poorer were taught a trade. The rest of the plan was not carried out, and in substitution for it the Pope established the Confraternity of our Lady of Compassion.

The conversion of the Chablais was completed and the Coadjutor then worked out in detail the settlement of the district as ordered by the Letters Apostolic. The Duke confirmed the restoration of Church property by letters patent which were registered by

the Senate of Chambéry. The Synod was held at Annecy to give effect to the settlement, but the Coadjutor had some trouble in overcoming the difficulties raised by the Knights and others who had for so many years held the property now reclaimed by the Church. In the midst of these labours he completed his work on the Cross, begun in 1595, and published it as the "Defence of the Standard of the Holy Cross."

Political trouble now arose between the Duke and the King of France. The Duke had agreed to exchange Bresse for the Marquisate of Saluzzo. The King fulfilled his part of the agreement, but the Duke, relying on the help of Spain, refused to give up Bresse. Henry at once occupied Bresse and invaded Savoy. Berne and Geneva offered to throw their troops into the Chablais. It was a critical moment in the history of the diocese of Geneva. The whole of the work of the Chablais mission was threatened with destruction. It was saved by the energy and firmness of the Bishop and his coadjutor. Francis interviewed Henry at the Château of Annecy, and begged that the Catholic religion might be left untouched. The King acceded to his request: "For the love of God and our Holy Father the Pope, and in consideration for you, Monsieur, who have at all times so worthily fulfilled your ministry, nothing shall be changed in what has been done. I promise it on the faith of a king. I promise it at the peril of my blood." The Coadjutor hastened to the Château of Allinges, now in the hands of a Calvinist Governor. He was taken prisoner, but was assisted in his mission by the Marquis de Vitry, to whom he was delivered by the French soldiers. The Governor assured him that the Calvinist preachers should minister only to their own soldiers, and should not disturb or interfere with the

Catholic clergy and their parishes. The Coadjutor was enabled therefore to continue his work of organisation under the French occupation.

Peace was re-established at Lyons, January 7, 1601. The king ceded Saluzzo. The Duke renounced his rights to Bresse, the district of Gex, and paid an indemnity of 100,000 crowns. The religious settlement was thus permanently secured. The Coadjutor was summoned from Thonon to preach the Lenten course at Annecy. He was preparing for it when he heard of the serious illness of his father. M. de Boisy was now seventy-nine years of age. Francis went at once to Sales to minister to him, but owing to the uncertainty of the illness, the old man bade him return to fulfil his duties at Annecy, with the hope of seeing him again at Easter. They parted with mutual blessings. Death came at last suddenly, and Francis was told of it as he was ascending the pulpit. He preached the sermon and then told the congregation of his father's death, and asked their prayers for the peace of his soul. He finished the course after the funeral was over.

The Treaty of Lyons restored the district of Gaillard to Savoy. Captain Vites de Basterga was placed in command. The ministers of Geneva were expelled, and Basterga encouraged his own soldiers to bring back the people to the Catholic faith. He also invited two Jesuit Fathers to superintend the work of conversion. The old men thanked God for the restoration of the faith of their fathers. Many had secretly practised Catholic customs, and now brought to light their crosses and banners, their chaplets and crucifixes. In December 1601, Bishop Claude de Granier visited the district in person and reconciled the churches. The Coadjutor wrote on December 21, 1601, to the

Papal Nuncio at Turin to report the completion of the work of conversion.

The district of Gex, to the north of Geneva, had been ceded to France by the Treaty of Lyons. It was part of the diocese of Geneva. The King was asked to restore the Catholic religion throughout the district. The Governor, the Baron de Luz, only re-established it in three parishes, leaving the rest for Henry's decision. The Calvinists of Geneva hoped to secure the complete establishment of the Protestant religion in a certain number of parishes which had formerly belonged to the Chapter of Geneva. The Coadjutor was therefore instructed to go to Paris to represent the cause of the Bishop and Chapter at the French Court. He left Annecy, January 3, 1602, again in the company of President Favre and his servant Georges Rolland. He reached Paris on January 22, and at once visited the Papal Nuncio. The Nuncio at once led him into the presence of the King. Henry gave him a favourable reception, and referred his letters to the minister Villeroi. The Coadjutor drew up a minute in which he demanded for the Catholics of Gex the same liberty of conscience as they enjoyed in the rest of France, and the restoration of the Church property in those parishes which were under the obedience of the King. The negotiations lasted the greater part of the year, owing to the obstinate resistance of the delegates of Geneva and the apathy of Villeroi.

Meanwhile the Coadjutor gave his time to preaching and the care of souls, and gained an experience of Court life which moulded the character of the spiritual counsel in the "Introduction to the Devout Life." The nine months of 1601 gave birth to its specific features. He learnt that the truths of the "Spiritual

Combat" needed development to meet the needs of his penitents at the French Court.

He preached the Lenten course from the pulpit of the Chapel Royal in the Louvre. He touched the hearts of some of the hardest Calvinists. Duperron said of him: "If you want to convince heretics, bring them to me. If you want to convert them, take them to M. de Genève. If you want both to convince and convert them, send them to M. de Berulle." Mme. de Perdrauville and Mme. Raconis were amongst his most distinguished converts. He entered into close spiritual intercourse with Mme. Acarie, who afterwards became a Carmelite, and was the founder of the Order of the Carmelites of St Teresa in France. She was beatified in 1791. He was known generally as M. de Genève, though only Coadjutor and a priest. He preached before the King at Fontainebleau, on the Sunday of Quasimodo, or Low Sunday. "M. de Genève," said the King, "is the phoenix of prelates. Some lack learning, some piety, some birth. He has illustrious birth, profound learning, sublime piety." He offered him more than once high preferment in France. He suggested that he should go on a mission to convert James VI. of Scotland, shortly to become James of England, to the Catholic faith. The Coadjutor remained true to his call in Savoy: "I cannot, Sir, I cannot accept your offers. I am married, I am espoused to a poor woman, and I cannot leave her for one who is richer. If your Majesty has a favour to show me, I ask nothing else than the re-establishment of the Catholic religion in the district of Gex."

He preached frequently during these nine months. He took an active part in assisting Mme. Acarie to found the Order of Barefooted Carmelites. He also

discussed with the Abbé de Barulle the introduction of the Fathers of the Oratory into Paris. He was even asked to take charge of it.

He obtained the letters for the religious settlement of Gex, Oct. 17, 1602. He at once left Paris, and at Lyons heard of the death of his old friend and bishop, Claude de Granier, which had taken place, Sept. 17, 1602. The Bishop had taken an active part, in the absence of the Coadjutor, in the celebration of the Papal Jubilee at Thonon, and the strain of the nine months of sole administration had been too great for him. Francis, however, visited Gex, and reached Savoy in the middle of November.

## VIII

1602-1608

THE Bulls of consecration were dated from Rome, July 15, 1602. They were five in number. The first conferred upon Francis de Sales the Bishopric of Nicopolis *in partibus infidelium*; the second appointed him Coadjutor; the third secured him the right of succession to Geneva on the death of Claude de Granier; the fourth permitted him to hold his provostship and the benefice of Petit Bornand as long as he was Coadjutor; the fifth assigned him a quarter of the revenues of the see of Geneva.

On his return from Paris he went into retreat at the Château de Sales with Fr. Ferrier, a Jesuit Father of Thonon. He drew up a rule of life for the guidance of his household as Bishop, and for the conduct of his own devotions. The latter part is interesting in relation to the rules laid down in the "Devout Life." He rose about 5.30. He spent an hour in meditation

and the recitation of the offices. The two hours from seven to nine were devoted to study. He said Mass at nine and dined at ten. He then attended to diocesan business. Before supper he said Vespers and Compline, and meditated on the mysteries of the Chaplet. After supper he read a book of devotion for an hour, partly for study, partly as a preparation for the morning's meditation. This was followed by Matins and Lauds. He rarely sat up late. "This letter has been written to you at midnight, but it is long since I have sat up so long. It is not right, especially for women, to get out of order for the sake of a trifle. You are no good for anything the whole of the next day."<sup>1</sup>

It is possible to derive some knowledge of his library of devotional books from the "Devout Life" and from the spiritual letters of this period. In a letter dated June 3, 1603, to Antoine Revol, Bishop Designate of Dol in Brittany, he commends for devotional reading the "Guide to Sinners" and the "Memorial" or "Love of God" of Grenada; the "Vanity of the World" by Stella; the works of Arias and the "Confessions of St Augustine." The works of the Capuchin Bellintani and the Jesuit Costerus are valuable as a help to the mysteries of the faith. The letters of Avila and of St Jerome are also strongly recommended. All these except Costerus have their place in the "Devout Life." He adds a list of books which are specially useful for the office of a Bishop. The "Cases of Conscience" by Cardinal Toletto should form a beginning. The "Magna Moralia" and "Pastorale" of St Gregory, the letters of St Bernard and the treatise "On Consideration" should follow. The "Decreta Ecclesiae Mediolanensis" is necessary, and the "Life of

<sup>1</sup> Letter to Mme, de Chantal, Feby. 1608.

Cardinal Borromeo " by Carlo a Basilica Petri sets out the model of a true pastor. But above all he is to have always at hand the Canons and the Catechism of Trent.

The consecration took place on the Festival of the Conception of the Blessed Virgin, Sunday, Dec. 8, 1603, in the parish church of Thorens, which had been specially decorated by Mme. de Boisy. The consecrating Bishop was Vespasiano Grimaldi, late Archbishop of Vienna, the Metropolitan see of Geneva. The assistant Bishop was Thomas Pobel, late Bishop of St Paul Trois-Châteaux, and Jacques Maistret, Bishop-Suffragan of Lyons. The Canons of Geneva were represented, and the choirs of the Cathedral and Collegiate Church of Annecy took part in the service. At the moment of consecration Francis was overcome with devotion and fell into a state of spiritual ecstasy.

He had prepared for his consecration by a retreat of twenty days. When the ceremony was over, he again withdrew to the Château de Sales, and commanded his cousin, Canon Louis de Sales, to take possession of the Bishopric in his name, and to arrange for his entry into Annecy on Saturday, Dec. 14. He was received with great acclamation, and was enthroned in the Cathedral Church. It was night before the *Te Deum* was sung and the blessing given.

He devoted himself at once to the work of his diocese. He heard the confessions of the poorest of the people that he might have an opportunity of helping them by his alms. He determined to stamp out the customs of St Valentine's Day, which though similar to those in England and France, were specially dangerous in Annecy because of the pledges and valentines exchanged by married people. He preached against

it, and called in the secular arm to suppress it. He substituted for the valentine a card, with the picture of a saint, and a passage from the Holy Scriptures or the Fathers, and distributed them as widely as possible. He thus anticipated the substitution of Christmas cards for valentines which has taken place within the last quarter of a century in England.

He preached his first Lenten course as Bishop at Annecy, and instituted the Catechism for children and for adults. He conducted it himself every Sunday afternoon, the congregation being summoned by a servitor vested in a kind of dalmatic, embroidered with the name of Jesus, who rang a bell at midday through the streets of the city. The service opened with the *Veni Creator*. The catechism of Bellarmine or Canisius was recited. The Bishop catechised. Hymns in French, many of his own composition,<sup>1</sup> and the metrical Psalms of Desportes were sung. He held his first ordination Feb. 22, 1603, and published the "*Avis aux Confesseurs*" and "*Rituel*" to aid the parish priests of his diocese in their discipline and worship.

After Easter he went to Turin, and on his return journey visited his old friend Juvenale Ancina, Bishop of Saluzzo. The Bishop invited him to preach, and afterwards, by way of compliment, said: "*Tu vere sales.*" Francis, quick to appreciate the play upon his own name of Sales, was equally quick to play upon his friend's name of Saluzzo: "*Tu sal et lux es, ego vero neque sal neque lux.*"

In the summer he visited Belley to confer with the Duc de Bellegarde, Governor of Burgundy, Bresse, Bugey, and Gex, with M. Janin, president of the

<sup>1</sup> Is the "*Viva, viva! Jesu,*" "*Glory be to Jesus,*" an Italian mission hymn of unknown origin, based upon one of these?

parliament of Dijon, and the Baron de Luz on the affairs of religion in Gex. He brought back the Duke to the Catholic faith. They then visited Gex together and still further strengthened the cause of the Catholic religion in the district. A wretched Protestant endeavoured to poison him with arsenic, and La Faye, the minister of Geneva, ventured to publish a pamphlet charging him with luxury, ambition, and idleness, and finding fault with him for keeping so great a number of horses and hounds. "The minister has omitted to mention the great number of my imperfections, and only censures me for those which I do not possess."

In the autumn he held an ordination at Thonon, and then visited Viuz, one of the old lordships of the Bishops of Geneva. At Sixt he enquired into the disorders of the monastery, but met with so much opposition from the Abbot, that he was unable to re-establish discipline for fifteen years. He held his first Synod at Annecy, Oct. 2, 1603. It opened with High Mass, followed by a procession through the city, a sermon by one of the Canons of the Collegiate Church, and a short devotional address by the Bishop. In the afternoon there were appointed ten examiners for the Diocese, twelve representatives of the clergy, and twenty overseers or arch-priests who should represent the Bishop in the twenty divisions of the Diocese. The Bishop then promulgated the statutes.

It was about this time that he received the invitation to preach the Lenten course of 1604 at Dijon. He was specially ready to accept the call because he hoped to obtain a final settlement of the religious affairs of Gex from the parliament of Burgundy, and to come to some arrangement with André Frémiot, councillor of the parliament of Dijon, who though not

in holy orders, had lately been nominated to the Archbishopric of Bourges, and had received from the King a grant of the Church property of Gex. Dijon was at this time as important to Francis as Turin, his diocese being partly in Savoy, partly in France. He was not therefore neglecting his duties as Bishop of Geneva when he accepted the invitation to preach at Dijon. It was indeed one of the most momentous decisions of his life.

At Dijon he was to make the acquaintance of Mme. de Chantal, the sister of André Frémiot, the Archbishop designate of Bourges. While he was preparing for his Lenten course by a retreat at the Château de Sales, he learned by an inner revelation that he was to be the founder of a new religious Order, and saw in a vision the widow and the religious who were to be its first members. About the same time Mme. de Chantal had a vision of an ecclesiastic in soutane and rochet who was to be her director and her guide. Mme. de Chantal was the youngest of the three children of M. Frémiot, president of the parliament of Dijon. She was born in 1572, and had been married to the Baron de Chantal, an officer who had distinguished himself in the Civil Wars. Mme. de Chantal proved herself a loving wife, and by her administrative ability improved the estate at Bourbilly near Semur. She was most careful of the religious welfare of her household. M. de Chantal was shot accidentally by a friend when hunting, and left his wife with four children, the eldest only six years old. She spent the first year of her widowhood at Bourbilly, and then went to live with her father at Dijon. It was then that she placed herself under a spiritual director who had been chosen by her friends. The choice was not a good one. He was a good

man, but unsympathetic and arbitrary. He not only bound her by a vow to seek no other director, but set a watch over her to see that she did not break her vow of obedience. She was then summoned to the Château de Monthelon, to take charge of the household of her father-in-law, the Baron de Chantal, a harsh and tyrannical old man. There is an allusion to her trials in one of the letters of St Francis. She showed so much kindness to the poor, and so much judgment in her house, that she became known as the Saint of Monthelon.

It was then that she was invited by her father to come to Dijon to attend the Lenten course of 1604. The old Baron gave his consent, and Mme. de Chantal reached Dijon the first Thursday in Lent. On the Friday she attended the sermon. She immediately recognised in the preacher the priest she had seen in the vision, and Francis when he saw her under the pulpit recognised her as the widow who had been revealed to him as the foundress of his new Order. He enquired of André Frémiot, and learning that she was his sister, was at once introduced to her. She told him she was under a vow of perpetual widowhood, and submitted to such directions as were not contrary to the vow she had made to her own director. At the end of Lent, in his absence, she made her confession to the Bishop, and thus began that close spiritual intercourse with him which has enriched the Church with its spiritual letters, and with the good works of the Order of the Visitation.

Her brother, André Frémiot, also became closely attached to Francis de Sales, and asked him to assist at his first Mass. He renounced all claim to the Church property in Gex.

The Bishop of Geneva also formed a close friend-

ship with the two daughters of M. Bourgeois de Crépy, president of the parliament. One of them, the Abbess of Puy d'Orbe, in the diocese of Langres, was attempting to re-establish discipline in her monastery. The other was married to M. Brulart, first president of the parliament of Dijon. The spiritual intercourse between these two sisters and Mme. de Chantal was fostered by the Bishop. "Nourish as much as possible," he wrote to Mme. de Chantal in 1605, the union between yourself, Madame de Puy d'Orbe and Mme. Brulart, for it seems to me that it will be profitable to them."

The spiritual letters which were the outcome of this intercourse afford the earliest traces of the counsels which form the "Introduction to the Devout Life." The sympathy and freedom of intercourse which existed between the Bishop and his three friends was a more favourable atmosphere than the reserve and restraint which marked the later correspondence with Mme. de Charmoisy. The spirit of devotion which breathes throughout the "Devout Life" is due to the sympathy of Mme. de Chantal, the Abbess of Puy d'Orbe, and Mme. Brulart. The restraint which made him regard the "Devout Life" as only an "Introduction" specially adapted for those who live in the world, and which therefore has made it of unique value as a spiritual guide, must be traced to the reserve of Mme. de Charmoisy, and to the circumstances of her life in Paris. The spirit of St Francis was kindled into the glow of love by the warm sympathy of his friends at Dijon; it was moulded by the experience of his life at Paris.

The spiritual correspondence of 1604 opens with a short letter to Mme. de Chantal, written in April, immediately after his return from Dijon. It is the

first fruits of the harvest of Dijon and is worthy of being preserved in the original.

“MADAME,—Dieu, ce me semble, m’a donné à vous; je m’en assure à toutes les heures de plus en plus. Je prie la bonté divine de nous mettre souvent ensemble dans les sacrées plaies de Jésus-Christ, et de nous y faire rendre la vie que nous en avons reçue. Je vous recommande à votre bon ange: faites-en autant pour moi, qui vous suis dédié en Jésus-Christ.—FRANÇOIS, ÉV. DE GENÈVE.”

In these letters of 1604, the “Spiritual Combat” holds the first place among his books of devotion. He commends also the “Way of Perfection” by St Teresa, the works of Grenada, Bellintani, Bruno and others, which he was certainly himself using at this time. St Bernard is frequently referred to because he was born in the neighbourhood of Dijon, and his example had therefore a special claim on the life of his three friends in Burgundy. “Devotion,” he writes to the Abbess of Puy d’Orbe, before May 1604, “is nothing else than the promptitude, fervour, affection, and movement which we have for the service of God. There is a difference between a good man and a devout man. The good man keeps the commandments of God, though it be not with great promptitude or fervour. The devout man not only observes them, but does so willingly, promptly, and with a good courage.”<sup>1</sup> Meditation is to be preferred to all other prayers. It may not always bring consolation. If the mind be dull, it is well to read a little, and then meditate a little.<sup>2</sup> The aspiration *Vive Jésus!* “Glory be to Jesus,” which two years later, in 1606, comes into use as a sacred seal in this spiritual correspondence,

<sup>1</sup> “Devout Life,” part i. chap. i.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, part ii. chap. ix.

occurs first in this letter to the Abbess of Puy d'Orbe.<sup>1</sup> "If bed is distasteful to you, get up earlier in the morning. For, my dear sister, it is scarcely credible how dangerous late hours at night are, and how much they weaken the brain. You do not feel it in youth, but you feel it later, and several have made their lives useless by it." She was confined to her room in the autumn by a serious illness. "It is not a good thing to hear Mass said in your room. Adore your Saviour at the altar as you lie in bed and be content. Daniel, when not able to go to the Temple, turned towards it to worship God. But I am of opinion you should communicate Sundays and Holy Days in bed, if the doctors allow it."<sup>2</sup> It is the same spirit of practical religion which breathes in the "Devout Life."

The meditations on the four last things are referred to in another letter of October 9.<sup>3</sup> He thinks those of Grenada are rather too long. He probably thought the same of Bruno, simple and beautiful as they are. He was therefore already simplifying the practice of meditation, and bringing them into the form which they have in the "Devout Life."<sup>4</sup> He encourages Mme. Brulant to persevere in her devotional habits amid the calls of her daily life, by the example of Sarah and Rebecca, of St Anne, St Elizabeth, and St Monica.<sup>5</sup> The golden rule of obedience is this: "We must do all by love, nothing by force. It is better to love obedience than to fear disobedience." The "Confessions of St Augustine" are specially commended to

<sup>1</sup> "Devout Life," part v. chap. xviii.

<sup>2</sup> To the Abbess of Puy d'Orbe, October 4, 1604.

<sup>3</sup> "Devout Life," part i. chaps. ix.-xviii.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, part ii, chaps. ii.-ix.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, part i. chap. iii.

Mme. de Chantal. "I love hymns, but they should be sung with feeling."

This spiritual correspondence forms to some extent the foundation of the "Introduction to the Devout Life." The important letter to the Archbishop of Bourges, brother to Mme. de Chantal, which is known as the "Treatise on Preaching," and was written in October 1604, is a key to the use of Holy Scripture and the method of illustration in the "Devout Life." Holy Scripture is to form the foundation of preaching. The teaching of the Fathers explains the Gospel, and expounds the Scriptures. It is like broken bread in comparison with a whole loaf. The "Lives of the Saints" are the Gospel set forth in work. They bear the same relation to Scripture that music which is sung bears to music which is written. Profane history must be used with great care; fables and poetry almost wholly avoided. We must not set up the idol of Dagon with the Ark of the Covenant. Francis, in this, departs from the standard set by St Jerome, and practised by his friend the Bishop of Belley. He did it with a purpose, to break down a custom which had prevailed until his time, probably as a result of the Renaissance. His father complained that his sermons were not embellished with quotations, and that he did not do justice to his scholarship. Natural history is most valuable. "It is a book which contains the word of God, but in a language every one does not know. Those who hear it by meditation do well to use it like St Anthony, who had no other library. It is a book useful for similitudes, for comparison, *a minori ad majus*." False miracles and absurd stories only discredit the ministry. Holy Scripture is to be interpreted in its fourfold sense:—

"Littera facta docet : quid credas, allegoria ;  
Quid speres, anagoge ; quid agas, tropologia."

It is the tropological or moral sense which gives the point to so much of the teaching of the "Devout Life."

There is indeed scarcely a chapter in it which does not illustrate these principles laid down in 1604. Holy Scripture, the teaching of the Fathers, especially St Gregory Nazianzen, St Augustine, St Bernard, the similitudes drawn not only from Nature itself, but from the Natural Histories of Pliny and Aristotle and other writers which were evidently studied for this purpose, form the chief part of its constructive teaching. The absence of reference to profane history, except in a very few instances, distinguishes it from the "Holy Living" of Jeremy Taylor. Sutton in his "Disce vivere" writes : "Some are not a little delighted to read the lives of the ancient worthies of the world, such as Julius Cæsar, Scipio, Alexander, and such other ; but these may sooner delight the fancy than instruct the soul. Come we to the Life of Christ." It is this loyalty to the Holy Scriptures, this use of the lives of the Saints, which places the "Introduction to the Devout Life" on so high a level of spiritual experience.

In 1605, Francis preached the Lenten course at La Roche. Clement VIII., with whom he had been brought into somewhat close contact, died early in the same year. He was succeeded by Leo XI., the Cardinal Alexander de Medici who had taken part in the Forty Hours at Thonon in 1598. He was in his sympathies a French Pope, and among his first acts was to inscribe the name of Francis de Sales in the number of those who were to have the cardinal's hat. Francis shrank from the dignity : "If I could but bring about the conversion of Geneva, even though

my robes should be reddened by my own blood, ah ! that is the purple I should be delighted to wear." But Leo XI. died only a few weeks after his election, and was succeeded by Paul V., who as Cardinal Borghese had taken part in the examination of Francis at Rome in 1599. The Bishop of Geneva wrote to him in July. His intercourse with the Jesuits, the Theatines, and the Capuchins, led him to understand the high pretensions of Paul V. He addressed him as the heart and sun of all ecclesiastical order :—

"Regnet Paulus V. ! Vivat pontifex maximus quem unxit Dominus super Israel Dei !"

He visited the Chablais after Easter, spent his summer at Annecy, and continued his visitation for the French portion of his diocese in October. The spiritual correspondence is again very full. In May he sent a present to Mme. de Chantal, a representation of our Lord with the Blessed Virgin and St Anne, accompanied by a short letter. He commends the example of St Catherine of Siena, and it is probable he was reading her life. It is frequently alluded to in the "Devout Life." In a letter dated August 30, on temptation, he writes to Mme. de Chantal : "I have just been near the hives, and some of the bees settled on my face. I wished to drive them off with my hand. No, said a peasant, do not fear, do not touch them, and they will not sting you. But if you touch them they will bite. I believed him, and not one bit me. Believe me, do not fear temptations, do not touch them, and they will not hurt you."<sup>1</sup> Did he keep these bees in his own garden? He again and again makes use of them as a simile in his works.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. "Devout Life," part iv. chap. ix.

In another short letter to Mme. de Chantal on the subject of humility, dated Sept. 13, 1605, he writes: "Let us go, my dear daughter, and walk through the low valleys of humble and little virtues. We shall see roses among the thorns, charity shining amid inward and outward affliction, the lilies also of purity, and the violets of mortification. Our arms are not long enough to attain the cedars of Lebanon. Let us be content with the hyssop of the valleys." It is the same gentle spirit which breathes in the "Introduction to the Devout Life." On All Saints' Day he writes to her again on the subject of widowhood: "In the garden of God widows are compared to the violets, flowers which are small and lowly, neither too showy in colour nor too strong in smell, but sweet to a marvellous degree. O how beautiful a flower is the Christian widow, small and lowly in her humility." It is a picture of the saintly life of his own widowed mother, Mme. de Boisy. He was moulding Mme. de Chantal by the experience of the home at Sales: and the fruit is given in the "Counsels on Widowhood."<sup>1</sup>

In a letter to Mme. Brulart he speaks of a lady who was so subject to the bad humour of her husband, that she had to assume an appearance of vanity, and to communicate secretly, lest she should raise a storm in her house. And yet by this road she made great progress. "Take care," he writes in another letter to her, "that your husband, your servants, your relations, are not offended by too long absence in church, or by the neglect of your household duties. Charity must rule us and enlighten us, that we may condescend to the will of our neighbours when it is not contrary to the commandments of God." These letters to

<sup>1</sup> "Devout Life," part iii. chap. xl.

Mme. Brulart form the basis of the chapters on the duties of the married life.<sup>1</sup>

In a short Christmas letter to Mme. de Chantal he writes: "Do not overburden yourself with austerities this Lent, except with the advice of your confessor, who in my opinion will not impose them upon you. May God crown the beginning of your year with roses tinged with His blood! Believe, my dear daughter, I have dedicated myself altogether to your service."

He was invited by the Senate of Savoy to preach the Lenten course of 1606 at Chambéry. The visit was rendered difficult by an attempt made to force the Bishop to issue a monition contrary to the privilege of the Church. Francis refused to consent, and the Senate was unable to coerce him. He returned to Annecy after Easter, and his presence in the town kept up the courage of the people during the raid of the Genevans, which took place in the spring. In the summer he visited the parishes in the mountains of Faucigny. He sent his brother, Jean François de Sales, a canon of the Cathedral, to Rome on a mission to Paul V., and to obtain certain Bulls necessary for carrying out still further the restoration of religion in the diocese. He gave him a letter of introduction to Cardinal Baronius, in which he speaks of his "Annales" as more precious than gold and diamonds, and as having had great success in the struggle against the enemies of religion.<sup>2</sup>

The spiritual letters of the year 1606 again afford many illustrations to the "Introduction to the Devout Life." They were written amid the overwhelming

<sup>1</sup> "Devout Life," part ii. chap. xx.; part iii. chaps. xxxviii.-xxxix.

<sup>2</sup> Letter to Card. Baronius, Nov. 28, 1606.

cares of his diocese. "The affairs of this diocese are not mere waters, they are torrents," he confesses to Mme. de Chantal, Jan. 30, 1606.<sup>1</sup> He commends the letters of St Jerome, especially that to Furia. He considers the "Spiritual Combat" more methodical and less difficult than the "Method of Serving God." He sends to Mme. de Chantal a report which he had received of the holy life of a simple villager of La Roche, whose friendship he had long valued, because of the beautiful example of her married life.

In another letter, dated Aug. 6, 1606, he distinguishes between humility and humiliation or abjection. "Humility is the recognition of our humiliation: the highest point of humility is not only to know our humiliation, but to love it." "The best kind of humiliation is that which we have not chosen. A religious would obey any one rather than her superior. And as for me, I would rather be snubbed by a superior in religion than by a father-in-law in my house. Our choice takes away a great part of the virtue."<sup>2</sup>

In 1607 the Bishop preached the Lenten course at Annecy. After Easter, he and his friend President Favre founded the Academie Florimontane, under the authority of the Duke of Savoy. The object of the Academy was the exercise of all the virtues, the sovereign glory of God, the service of the princes of Savoy, and the public good. Only approved and learned men were to be received. Painters, sculptors, and architects were to be admitted to the general meeting. "Lectiones vel arithmeticae, vel geometricae, vel cosmographicae, vel philosophicae, sinon theologicae, aut politicae, sunt." No avaricious man was to set his

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Preface to "Devout Life."

<sup>2</sup> Cf. "Devout Life," part iii. chap. vi.

foot in the academy. It was, in fact, a kind of university, and it shows the wide interests which the Bishop had. His studies at Paris and Padua had given him a wide range of learning, and his friendship with President Favre led him to found this school of learning at Annecy. It is noteworthy that on two occasions in his "Controversies" he quotes from the Essays of Montaigne.<sup>1</sup> The Essays were especially delightful to his friend the Bishop of Belley: "Livre qui a ravi ma jeunesse en admiration, et que j'ai lu et relu avec des délices non pareilles."<sup>2</sup> It was in part owing to this wide culture of the Bishop of Geneva that the "Introduction to the Devout Life" met with the approval of the men of the world. It was this which recommended it to James I. of England. He had received a copy from the Queen Marie de Medici of France, bound in diamonds and pearls, and valued it so highly that he had it always by him and read it regularly.<sup>3</sup> The Duke of Nemours was chosen prince and protector of the academy, with the Bishop and President Favre as his assessors. The Bishop presided over the faculties of philosophy and theology, the President over the faculty of jurisprudence. They shared the presidency in literature and science between them.

He spent most of the summer and autumn of 1607 in visitation work, and while at St Jean de Sixt, consecrated the altar of the chapel at Villaret, which had been founded on the site of the house of the Blessed Peter Favre, one of the first friends of St Ignatius Loyola, and first preacher of the Society of Jesus.

<sup>1</sup> "Controverses," part ii. disc. xxv.

<sup>2</sup> "Notice sur la vie de J. P. Camus." Migne, vol. ii. p. xliii.

<sup>3</sup> Migne, vol. i. p. 660.

The ceremony took place on Oct. 9, 1607, and is referred to in the "Devout Life."<sup>1</sup>

The spiritual correspondence of this year again illustrates the growth of the "Devout Life." In a letter to M. Frémiot, February 1607, he writes: "I shall keep this Lent in residence at Annecy, and hope to refresh my soul. It is like a clock out of order. I must take it to pieces, and after cleaning it and oiling it, I must put it together again that it may strike more correctly."<sup>2</sup> In a letter to Mme. de Chantal in August 1607, occurs a reference to Mme. de Charmois: "I do not know where she is, although it is said that she will be here in a few days." It would not appear from this that he was in constant correspondence with her at this time. To a lady in November 1607 he writes: "The 'Method,' the 'Perfection,' the 'Pearl,' are very obscure books, and march along the crests of the mountains. Read and re-read the 'Spiritual Combat.' It ought to be your dear book. It is clear and altogether practical." As his own work is taking shape, he recognizes more and more clearly the value of his own "dear book." Only two months later, on January 24, 1608, he writes to Mme. de Chantal: "Yes, my daughter, the 'Spiritual Combat' is a great book. I have carried it in my pocket for fifteen years, and I never read it without profit."

The year 1608 is of special importance, as it was then that he determined to publish the "Introduction to the Devout Life." He preached the Lenten course at Rumilly, a little town eight miles to the west of Annecy. If it is to this course he refers in a

<sup>1</sup> "Devout Life," part ii. chap. xvi.; "Life of Blessed Peter Favre," Boero, p. 189.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. "Devout Life," part v. chap. i.

letter the following year to the Archbishop of Vienne, he preached there only twice a week. He probably set in order the scattered papers which form the "Devout Life," for it is difficult to find another time between Lent and the publication in the autumn in which he could have done it. The March letters of 1608 to Mme. de Chantal are from Rumilly, and in the retirement he found there he had the quiet opportunity he needed for the work. He wrote on March 3: "I wish to send you an exercise which I have drawn up for the use of Mme. de Charmois, for I would not wish to do anything without your knowing it. I have drawn it up for the purpose of making her renew her good resolutions, in which indeed she has very steadily persevered. She is a good soul, but it is wonderful how little she hurries herself. She has never written to me of her soul before these last few days." On the 7th he writes: "I have been obliged to write many letters." It would appear that this was the occasion in which he gathered up the correspondence of the last four years, adapting it to the special requirement of Mme. de Charmois.

At the beginning of June he went to Thonon on a mission from the Holy See to meet the president of the Senate of Chambéry. He then received back into the Church two priests, one a Jesuit, who had apostatized. On his return to Annecy he learnt that the fiery Capuchin, Father Cherubini, who had taken so active a part in the latter days of the Chablais mission, had accused him to the Pope of being too easy in tolerating heretical books in the diocese. Francis knew the value of the work which the Capuchins had done; he knew also their rash temper. He did not reproach Fr. Cherubini, but he wrote to a Cardinal to clear himself of the unwarranted charge.

"If it were true, His Holiness should not only be indignant with me, but should punish my negligence or rather my faithlessness. It is true that Geneva produces many most pestilent tracts, but that our Savoyards read them is in no way true." This letter was written July 2. The Preface to the "Introduction to the Devout Life" is dated at Annecy, St Mary Magdalen's Day, July 22, 1608.

## IX

1608

IT is clear from the spiritual correspondence of the years 1604 to 1608 that the material of which the "Devout Life" is composed had been slowly growing under the hand of St Francis. The circumstances under which it was published are stated in the Preface. "A soul full indeed of honour and of virtue, having received of God some time since the grace to wish to aspire to the Devout Life, desired my assistance to this end. I who was under obligation to her in many ways, and who had long remarked in her much leaning to it, took great care in instructing her. Having conducted her by all the exercises suitable to her desire and her condition, I left her some memorials in writing that she might have recourse to them as she needed. She afterwards communicated them to a very learned and devout religious, who, thinking that many would derive profit from them, urged me strongly to publish them. He had little difficulty in persuading me, because his friendship had much power over my will, and his judgment great authority over mine."<sup>1</sup>

The Bishop of Belley states that Mme. de Charmois

<sup>1</sup> "Devout Life" Preface.

Marclaz was a lady of property, a native of Normandy, who had married a gentleman of some note in Savoy, whose estates were partly in the diocese of Geneva. He was a near relation of Francis de Sales, and lived chiefly in Savoy. Mme. de Charmois lived much in Paris, and was much admired for her wit and beauty. She is said to have placed herself under the direction of the Bishop, after having heard a sermon preached by him on Jan 24, 1605. But the statement made by him to Mme. de Chantal in March 3, 1608, would seem to imply that the spiritual intercourse was not very frequent, and scarcely went below the surface. There is only one letter addressed to her before 1608 outside the "Devout Life." It is dated May 20, 1606. "You could not, my dear cousin, communicate your troubles, whether small or great, any more than your contentedness, to a soul more sincere on your behalf than mine is, and doubt not that I will keep with all faithfulness the secret which, outside the common law, the confidence you impose on me binds me to indissolubly. I will commend it to our Lord when I go to the altar. I am glad to see that you place yourself in God's hands. . . . It is a fact that I cannot prevent myself from speaking to you of the exercises of the heart and the soul. It is because I not only love yours but cherish it tenderly before God, who in my opinion derives much devotion from it. But go on quite gently with your outward exercises, and do not trouble to go on foot to St Claude."<sup>1</sup>

The letter seems to show that she had difficulties in the way of devotion, and that Francis was persevering to overcome them. The same anxiety appears in the letter of May 1607 to Mme. de Chantal: "I do not know where Mme. de Charmois is. It is said she

<sup>1</sup> Migne, vol. vi. p. 28.

will be here in a few days, and I hope she will. For, you see, I am always a little in trouble of the time of probation (*du noviciat*). I say in trouble without trouble: for I am full of good hope, because of our Lord, who is so good and so gentle, and so loving to souls who desire to love Him." She was evidently very reserved. He writes in March 1608: "She has never written to me of her soul before these last few days."<sup>1</sup> He encloses an exercise, perhaps the declaration or protestation of the "Devout Life."<sup>2</sup> "She does not cease to ask," he adds, "when you are coming, and makes herself believe it must be for the whole of this year. Ah! God knows how ardently my heart would desire it, if I did not think that the Divine will wishes us to have a little patience. But let us always hope much!" "I do not say this to praise her, for I like people to write to me frequently. Indeed, I would rather see a little eagerness than never to see any letters for three or four months."

It was thus amid reserve on the part of Mme. de Charmoisy and anxiety on the part of St Francis that this spiritual correspondence, these fugitive leaves of the devotional life, were wafted into the treasury of the Church. According to the Bishop of Belley the correspondence lasted two years. She then spent six months at Chambéry on business connected with her husband's estates. She showed the letters to Fr. Ferrier, the Rector of the Jesuit College and the spiritual adviser of the Bishop, and under his direction they were copied by members of the College. Fr. Ferrier asked the Bishop to publish them, and perhaps used influence at Paris to bring them to the notice of Henry IV.

<sup>1</sup> Is not this the "some time since" of the Preface of July 22, 1608?

<sup>2</sup> "Devout Life," part i. chap. xx.

The King not only supported the request of Fr. Ferrier, but also again endeavoured to press upon Francis high preferment in France.

One other letter when read in the light of the Rumilly correspondence of 1608 is evidence that the book took its final shape during the Lenten retirement in that town. At the end of March 1609, the Bishop wrote to Pierre de Villars, the Archbishop of Vienne and his own Metropolitan, to thank him for his commendation of the work. "It is a memorial I had drawn up for a good soul who desired my direction, and that amid the occupations of Lent, in which I was preaching twice a week." It was in this same Lent that he wrote that she had never before written to him about her soul. St Francis once wrote: "You know, my dear daughter, that Lent is the harvest of souls." What a rich harvest is to be associated with the Lent at Rumilly!

The "Introduction to the Devout Life" was published at Lyons, by Pierre Rigaud. The first edition was shorter than the present one, and probably wanted among others the four last chapters of the third part. They deal more fully with counsels which had been given earlier in the work. The following letters of commendation were printed in the early editions. They are not given in Migne's edition, nor in that of De Sacy (Paris, 1860), which has been used as the basis of translation. They are therefore printed here in the original, as they appear in the Paris edition of 1667. They occur after the author's preface.

"Ames reveches à la devotion, et qui n'en ayant la pratique, vous gabbez de ceux qui s'y baignent, voicy qui est digne d'estre leu, pour vous y faire prendre goust. Et vous, ô Ames devotes, qui doucement goustez les souefves fruicts que produit l'arbre de

piété et devotion, lisez ce livre, et vous y trouverez qu'il vous contentera, et verrez qu'en iceluy brille le zele et l'affection du Reverendissime Sieur Auteur, au salut des Ames, duquel en tant d'instances la sainte Foy paroist, et le livre ne propose rien qui ne soit conforme, et à la Foy, et à la sainte Eglise Chrestienne, Catholique, Apostolique et Romaine.

"Fait à Lyon ce 4. d'Aoust, 1608. FRERE ROBERT BERTHELOT, Evesque de Damas. Suffragant de Lyon.

"Frere ESTIENNE CARTA, Docteur Theologien et Prieur de Convent de nostre-Dame de Confort.

"Veu l'attestation des Docteurs Theologiens signez ey-dessus, il est permis d'imprimer la presente *Introduction à la vie devote*. A Lyon ce 8 de Septembre, 1608. CHALOM, V. G.

"Veu les precedentes Attestations, Nous a vous permis d'imprimer le present livre, dans lequel l'Auteur sera trouvé semblable à ce qu'il est en sa vie : ses actions ordinaires estans pleines d'aussi profonde pieté qu'il enseigne en ce livre à autrui. Fait à Lyon, le 8 Septembre, 1608. DE MONTOLON."

## X

1608-1616

THE manuscript of the "Devout Life" was forwarded to Lyons at the end of July 1608. The Bishop wrote to Mme. de Chantal, September 1608: "Our book of devotion has not yet been printed; when it is, I will send it to all to whom I have promised it." In February 1609 he sent some to her, asking her to give one to the Abbess of Puy d'Orbe, another to Mlle. de Traves. "Fr. de Mandi has asked me for one; if you give him the one you have I will give you a better copy here. It will console him. I should

like to send some to several persons, but I assure you that only thirty copies have come into this country, and I cannot send them to the tenth part of those to whom I ought to give them. It is true that I ought not to trouble about it, because I know that there are more there than there are here. Yet I think I ought to send one to M. de Chantal, and that he would be offended if I did not do so, so I send it with this."

His Metropolitan, the Archbishop of Vienne, Pierre de Villars, wrote to him, March 25, 1609, a warm letter of thanks and appreciation. It is, next to the letters permissory published in 1608, the most weighty testimony of the value of the work. It is therefore like them given in the original.

"Monsieur, le livre spirituel que vous venez de mettre sous la presse me ravit, m'échauffe, m'entasia tellement, que je n'ai ni langue ni plume pour vous exprimer l'affection dont je suis transporté pour vous, par rapport à ce grand et signalé service que vous rendez à la divine bonté, et à l'avantage inestimable qui en reviendra à ceux qui seront assez heureux de lire cet ouvrage comme on doit lire. Mais que ne devait-on pas attendre d'un évêque de Genève tel que vous. Sinon quelque ouvrage, entre autres, qui mît fin à l'infamie de Genève, qui à infecté toute l'Europe par son hérésie?"

He then weighs the relative value of books of devotion and books of controversy in the struggle with heresy, and concludes: "Excusez, s'il vous plaît, ma prolixité. Il m'a fallu contenter mon âme, en lui donnant la satisfaction de vous marquer sa joie et son contentement sur votre beau et bon livre, que je ne puis assez louer." There is another short fragment by the same writer, in which he speaks of the pleasure he has had in bringing the book before the notice of his

friends : “ Je ne désavoue pas que je n’aie fait une grande fête de votre ‘ Introduction ’ en plusieurs bonnes compagnies ; mais ce n’est pas ma recommandation qui l’a mise en vogue : elle vole de ses propres ailes, elle est douce de son propre sucre, elle est embellie et enrichie de ses propres couleurs et de ses bijoux. Celui qui a de bon vin n’a pas besoin d’enseigne.”

Francis received this letter on April 8, and in his answer he says : “ Je proteste que rien ne m’est arrivé, il y a longtemps, qui m’ait rempli de tant de joie et honneur. . . . C’est un grand fruit que ce pauvre petit livre m’a rendu, et lequel, certes, je n’attendais pas ; mais pour lequel seul, plus que pour aucun autre duquel je me sois aperçu jusqu’à présent, je le veux désormais aimer et cultiver.” He then states how the book was written and published, and adds : “ Since, such as it is, you give it your approbation, if ever it returns to the press I shall think about enlarging and increasing it by certain sections which in my opinion will make it more useful to the public, and less unworthy of the favour you have shown it.”

The testimony of the Archbishop of Vienne expressed the general feeling of the bishops and doctors and laymen of the age. The General of the Carthusians, Dom Bruno d’Affringues, considered that the author had attained such high perfection that he advised him to write no more. “ If God has been willing to give His blessing to this book,” he said to the Bishop of Belley, “ why should He deny it to a second ? Can He not make water which is living and refreshing spring forth from the jaw-bone of an ass ? ” “ You see, these good people love me, and it is the love they bear me which makes them speak as they

do. But if they turned their eyes from me, an unworthy and wretched man, and fixed them on God, they would speak differently.”

There was some discordant language, some dissentient action. There were some, as he says in his Preface to the “Love of God,” who not only found fault with him, but slandered him in public because he had written of dancing as a matter in itself indifferent, and of joking as lawful for purposes of recreation. A Capuchin Father, preaching at Avignon, not only condemned the teaching as a weak and culpable condescension to the worldly and to sinners, but attacked the person of the writer. He gave point to the violence of his language by tearing to pieces the copy which he had brought with him into the pulpit. Francis was familiar with the rough zeal of the Capuchins, for one of them, his old friend and fellow-worker, Father Cherubini, had charged him at Rome with laxity of discipline in the guidance of the diocese. He only remarked that the preacher had been animated by the best intention, but would have done better if he had taken the trouble to read more carefully what he had written. The preacher was severely censured by his superiors.

The letter to the Archbishop of Vienne, in which he acknowledges the congratulations which had been sent to him, is also of interest because he submits to the Archbishop his literary plans for the future: “I will tell you frankly and with confidence my intentions in this matter. My opportunities will not allow me to undertake any work of large size. Indeed I have not the mental capacity for it. Therefore I leave the great designs to the great workmen. I have conceived certain little works less laborious, and yet sufficiently suitable to the condition of my life, which

is not only vowed but consecrated to the service of my neighbour for the glory of God. . . . I am meditating upon a little book on the Love of God, not to treat it in a speculative manner, but to show the practice of it in the observance of the commandments of the first table. This will be followed by another, which will show the practice of the same divine Love in the observance of the commandments of the second table. And both will be reducible to a moderate and handy volume. I think also of putting forth some day a little calendar and diary for the conduct of the devout soul, in which I shall represent to Philothea holy occupations for all the weeks of the year."

He then speaks of the criticism of the Bishop of Montpellier on the "Devout Life": "He tells me that I am too hurried and concise in several places, not giving sufficient substance to my counsels. In this without doubt I see that he is right. But having drawn it up for a soul I was often seeing, I was purposely brief in what I wrote because of the opportunity I had of expanding it in words. The other thing, he says, is that for a simple and first introduction, I bring too much before my Philothea. And this was because the soul I was dealing with was already very virtuous, though she had never yet tasted the devout life. This is why in a short time<sup>1</sup> she advanced so far. Now both these faults I can easily remedy, if ever this Introduction is reprinted."

The second edition was published in the summer or autumn of 1609. He sends a copy of it to the Duke of Savoy, September 16, 1609: "I beg your Highness to regard with favour this little book which I send

<sup>1</sup>This implies that the correspondence on the "Devout Life," with Mme. de Chermois was of short duration, and probably dates from the time of the Rumilly letters,

you in all humility. Devotion is its subject, the glory of God is its object, and its writer is in every kind of duty devoted to your Highness in obedience. It was already published last year, but so imperfectly that I dared not expose it to the view of so great a prince. Now that it is a little less badly arranged, I take the liberty of sending it." He also sends a copy to Mme. de Chantal, "*un beau livre,*" and promises her a copy of the third edition, about which he is going to take particular care. The following summer, the editor, Pierre Rigaud, visited Francis at Annecy and presented him with the sum of 400 crowns, the profit he had made by its sale. The Bishop gave it away at once in charity.

In the summer of 1609 he was occupied with the reform of the monastery of Talloires on the Lake of Annecy. He was the more interested in it because his ancestor, Gerard de Sales, in the twelfth century, had retired to it soon after its foundation by Rudolf III. of Burgundy. His work met with much opposition, but by the aid of Fr. Claude de Coex he was able to restore discipline. "The palm tree," he writes to him, July 10, 1609, "the queen of trees, only produces its fruit a hundred years after it is planted. It is well to have a generous heart and a good mind in a work of such great importance."

"I shall be away from here in the month of July," he writes. "I have to go and consecrate a worthy Bishop whom we have at Belley." Jean Pierre Camus had been nominated by Henry IV. to the bishopric of Belley for his literary ability, his piety, and his learning. He was only twenty-five years old, and a special dispensation had been granted for his consecration. He wrote on St Joseph's Day, March 19, 1609, to the Bishop of Geneva to ask him to consecrate him.

Francis wrote in reply : “ Well, my very dear brother, let it then be by my ministry that you will be adorned with the great character of the evangelical priesthood, so that in some very real way which flesh and blood understands not, we may contract a spiritual relationship which neither death nor the ashes of our bodies can efface, a relationship which will last eternally, and for which my spirit will be in a real position of paternity, filiation, and fraternity with yours. God knows I would go to the end of the world to set the mitre upon your head, and that I should be jealous if any one else were to take this honour away from me.” Such was the beginning of this friendship between the two bishops, a friendship which was kept fresh by an annual interchange of visits, and which bore fruit in the “ *Esprit du Bienheureux François de Sales*,” the great work of love and devotion in which the Bishop of Belley, the Boswell of the seventeenth century, has preserved the sweetness and beauty and strength of the life and teaching of St Francis de Sales.

On his return from Belley he received an order from Henry IV. to confer with the Baron de Luz at Gex on the affairs of religion in that province. He set out with a party of twelve, and on reaching the Rhone found the river so swollen that it was impossible to cross it by boat. The only way to Gex was by the bridge at Geneva. He approached the city, celebrated at St Julien, and then rather than postpone his journey, determined to face the danger at Geneva. His attendants said he would certainly be arrested if he gave his own name and title. “ Well,” he answered, “ you will call me quite simply the Bishop of the Diocese.” When the Bishop reached the gate of the city, the officer in charge said : “ ‘Of the Diocese ;’ I do not know that country.” The entry, however, was made in the

register, and Francis passed through the city unnoticed. The other gate was closed during sermon time, and the Bishop waited for an hour in an inn, and then left the city. The people were enraged when they heard that he had passed through. "Let him but return!" they wrote in the register against the words, "The Bishop of the Diocese." The Baron de Luz was alarmed at the risk which the Bishop had faced. The incident had further consequences. It was reported to the Duke of Savoy, and the Duke, suspicious of the designs of Francis in Geneva, thought at first that the visit had some political purpose. The Bishop wrote and explained the circumstances. In a letter to his friend M. Deshayes at the French court, he said: "I passed through Geneva with some amount of imprudent rashness, and wrote in the register: 'Francis de Sales, Bishop of this Diocese.' The whole of the slander has been based on this." . . . "I send you these three books, one to your wife, one to Mlle. de Touteville, and another to Mme. la Marquise de Menelay."

In September 1608, the founding of the Order of the Visitation was still a solemn secret between the Bishop and Mme. de Chantal. In a short letter, September 20, he speaks of a peasant girl who, after confession, had requested that she might be allowed to serve in the house he was going to establish. "I inquired where she had heard the news, which was still hidden with God. 'From no one,' she said, 'but I say what I think.' " He had spoken to her of his plan in 1604. After his visit to Dijon she had gone on a pilgrimage to St Claude and had visited Mme. de Boisy at Sales. This pilgrimage was a crisis in her life. The friendship formed at Dijon deepened. Francis released her from the vows she

had made to her former confessor, and himself undertook her spiritual guidance. He would not, however, unfold his plans in detail for a year. She visited Annecy again in 1605, at Whitsuntide. He then told her that God had "destined her to be the foundress of an Order where the charity and gentleness of Jesus Christ was to preside." She consented at once to carry out the wish of the Bishop. It was to both of them a time of deep spiritual communion. "Yes, my daughter," he wrote, July 10, 1605, "these are days of which the memory will be eternally agreeable and sweet, provided that our resolutions, taken with so much strength and courage, remain secret and hidden under the precious seal which I have set to them. I wish, my daughter, that we may celebrate the anniversary of these days by the addition of some special exercises. I wish to call them the days of our dedication, since in them you have so entirely dedicated your spirit to God."

The secret was carefully kept. Mme. de Chantal persevered in her duties to her father-in-law and her children. Meanwhile the intimacy between the two families increased, and a marriage was at last arranged between the Baron de Thorens, the youngest brother of Francis, and the eldest daughter of Mme. de Chantal. It was still a secret in September 1608. The Bishop writes about Christmas 1608: "Courage, my daughter, God wishes to aid us in our design. He is preparing for us the choicest souls. Made-moiselle de Blonay,<sup>1</sup> of whom I have already spoken to you, has declared to me her desire to be a religious. God has marked her out for the Congregation. I have told her to let me keep the secret."

<sup>1</sup> She became the third Superior of the Order on the death of Mme. de Chantal in 1641.

The secret was divulged in 1609. Mme. de Chantal visited Annecy and Sales in the summer, and it was arranged that the marriage should take place in September at Dijon, and that she should unfold her plans to her father, President Frémiot. Her eldest daughter was about to be married, the two others were to take the veil, and her son was being brought up by his grandfather at Dijon. She was therefore freer than she was in 1604. The old President was overwhelmed with grief when he heard of his daughter's vows. "What, my dear girl, does a father who has always loved you so tenderly count for nothing! At least, let me die before you leave; then do as you please." He made her promise to do nothing till he had seen the Bishop. Her brother, the Archbishop of Bourges, used his influence to discourage her, and told her that as daughter and as mother she had grave duties to fulfil. She remained firm, and left the decision to the Bishop.

The marriage was celebrated at the Château de Monthélon on September 13, 1609. On the next day the Bishop and the Archbishop conferred with the President. Mme. de Chantal said that it was only just that after she had lived so long for her children, she might be allowed to live at last for God and for herself. Moreover, the state of life she was going to embrace would not hinder her from watching over their conduct, and if need be, over their affairs. Francis stated that she would still be responsible before God for her children, and that he recognised it as the call of God. There was some discussion as to the site of the first house. The President wished it to be at Dijon, the Archbishop at Bourges or Autun; Mme. de Chantal chose Annecy, because an

institution in its early days had daily need of the counsels of its founder.

During the winter Francis corresponded with Mme. de Chantal about the new institution. In a little note of November 1609 he again speaks of the peasant girl, Anna Costa : " She asked to fast on bread and water in Advent, and to go barefoot all the winter. O my daughter ! I must tell you what I said to her, for I think it is as good for the mistress as for the servant. I said I desired the daughters of the Congregation to have their feet well shod, but their heart unshod and bare of all earthly affections ; to have their heads well covered, but their spirit uncovered, by perfect simplicity and detachment from self-will." In February 1610 he wrote to say that Mlle. Favre had determined to join the order, with the goodwill of her father, his old friend President Favre. " I believe that we shall make something good of her." On February 8, 1610, he wrote to M. de Blonay : " Hold your daughter in readiness to come to us soon after Easter, for we hope to begin about that time."

But before Lent was over a great sorrow fell upon Francis. Mme. de Boisy spent a month after Christmas at Annecy, in prayer and frequent communion, and in spiritual intercourse with her son. She returned to Sales for Lent, and spent the whole of Ash-Wednesday in Church. In the evening she read three chapters of the " Devout Life." Next morning she had a stroke of apoplexy. The Bishop came over at once. She kissed his hand : " I owe this out of respect to my father." She then embraced him in her arms, and kissing him again, said : " And this mark of tenderness I owe you as my son." She lived only two days, and received the last Sacrament and Blessing from Francis. He writes to M.

Deshayes : "I was prepared to preach at Salines in the County of Burgundy, but had been refused permission by the Bishop of Besançon : I do not know the reason, but I believe God has ordered it, that I might have the satisfaction of giving the last blessing to my mother, and closing her eyes after death. She was one of the sweetest and most innocent souls it was possible to meet with." On March 11 he wrote to Mme. de Chantal : "I must tell you that I had the courage to give her the last blessing, to close her eyes and mouth, and to give her the last kiss of peace at the moment of her passing. After that my heart overflowed, and I wept over this good mother more than I have ever done since I was in the church. But it was without any spiritual bitterness, thanks to God."

The departure of Mme. de Chantal had been postponed owing to the urgent wish of her father. She first took leave of her father-in-law, the old Baron de Chantal, and asked his pardon and his blessing. The old man was softened by this request. He embraced her, and with tears wished her all the happiness of which she was worthy. The parting at Dijon was overwhelming in its sadness. The whole family was gathered together in the house of President Frémiot, on March 29, 1610. Her son, Bénigne de Chantal, begged her once again to stay with them. She replied that she was obliged to offer to God all she loved in the world, even the joy of living with her only son. At the last moment she stepped forward to go to her father who had retired to another room. Bénigne threw himself on the threshold and said : "Well, mother, if I am too weak to keep you back, at least it shall be said you had to kick your son as you went out." The poor mother stopped, wept bitterly,

and with a cry of pain which rang through all their hearts, she passed over the body of her son. She met with nobler treatment from her father. He gave her his blessing, and said: "Go then, my dear child, where God calls you; and let us both stop our tears that we may render more complete homage to the will of God, and that the world may not think that our constancy is broken."

She reached Annecy safely in the company of her son-in-law, M. de Thorens, her daughters, and Mlle. de Brécharde. She spent some time with the Bishop, and then went to Thorens until all was ready. Some delay was caused by a lady who had promised to join the order and find a house failing at the last moment. The Bishop was obliged to sign the agreement in his own name.

The ceremony of institution took place on Trinity Sunday, June 6, 1610. Mlle. de Brécharde and Mlle. Favre were admitted together with Mme. de Chantal, and Anna Costa was made lay sister. They confessed and communicated and then received the blessing from the Bishop.

Amid the joy of the institution of his order he had more than one cause of great sorrow. Henry IV. was assassinated on May 14, 1610. The Bishop had a very high opinion of him, and had not only received from him many marks of personal favour, as in the publication of the "Devout Life," but much assistance in the affairs of Gex. "This prince," he wrote to M. Deshayes, "so great in his birth, so great in valour, so great in victory, so great in good fortune, so great in peace, so great in reputation, to whose life in a word greatness seemed to be attached, ought to have died a glorious death. Yet he has died by an unknown hand, in the middle of the street!"

Two days after the institution, June 8, 1610, his old friend and governor, Canon Jean Déage, died. Francis always held him in respect, and Déage did not hesitate to rebuke him if he thought the Bishop was failing in the way of perfection. He officiated at the funeral in the Cathedral. At the celebration he could only say the opening words of the Lord's Prayer; the rest were drowned in his tears. "Would you like to know" he said to his almoner, "what made me cry when I began the Pater Noster? It was because I remembered it was this really good man who first taught me to say it."

It was at this time that he was in correspondence with the Duke of Savoy in the matter of the canonisation of Amedeo III.,<sup>1</sup> Duke of Savoy, who died at Thonon in 1435 and was buried at Turin. In the letter to the Duke, September 16, 1609, in which he sent to him the "Devout Life," he spoke of two figures of the Blessed Amé as a proof of the veneration in which he was held in his diocese. In March 1612 he begged Paul V. to accede to the canonisation for the honour of Savoy and the ducal house. He supported it by one addressed to the Congregation of Rites, in which he spoke of the canonisation as an encouragement to the Catholics of Savoy, who had suffered so much from the heretics of Geneva.

Mme. de Chantal and her companions were professed in the summer of 1611. A few weeks later her father, M. Frémiot, died, and she was permitted to go to Dijon to look after her affairs and to make some provision for her son. Mlle. de Bréchart was left in charge of the House. "My dearest daughter," the Bishop wrote to her in September, "you must take

<sup>1</sup> He is referred to among the Princes in the "Devout Life," part i. chap. iii.

rest, and sufficient rest, and of your charity leave some of the work for others. You must not wish to wear all the crowns yourself."

The spiritual letters of this period no longer contain the references to the devotional works which mark the correspondence from 1604 to 1608. The "Devout Life" had taken their place among his friends. There was one exception. In a letter to a lady in February 1612, he writes: "Reread the Spiritual Combat and give special attention to the instructions in it. It will be of great service to you." He was still faithful to his own "dear book" of devotion.

The affairs of the diocese brought him into correspondence with the Queen-Mother, Mary de Medici, and the Duke of Savoy. There was need of great care, owing to the strained relations between the two countries. He had enemies at the court of Savoy who again and again accused him of political intrigues across the frontier. He had been invited to preach the Lenten course of 1613 at Lyons, but for political reasons the Duke refused his consent. Later in the year he was asked to preach in Paris. He explained the difficulty to M. Deshayes, and on the advice of M. Favre determined not to approach the Duke on the subject again. Yet in December he still hoped that he might be able to go to Paris in Lent.

Madame de Chantal's health was a source of great anxiety to the Bishop. She was dangerously ill in 1613. The physicians were unable to relieve her pain. One of them said: "I see but one cause of her illness. Madame is ill with the love of God, and I cannot cure such illness as this." There may be reference to this in the seventh book of the Love of God, in which this subject is especially treated in chapters X.-XIV. She at length obtained relief and recovered her

health through a relic of S. Carlo Borromeo. The Bishop in acknowledgment of her recovery made a pilgrimage to the shrine of S. Carlo, who had been canonized in 1610. He was received at Milan with great honour by Cardinal Federigo Borromeo, the Archbishop. He said Mass at the tomb of the Saint, and spent several hours in prayer before it. He offered the Barnabite Fathers the direction of the College of Annecy. On his way back he was present at Turin at the exposition of the Shroud of Christ. He reached Annecy on Whitsun Eve. On Whitsun Day, a dove which had been released from a fiery cloud under the roof of the Cathedral settled upon his head. The sign was repeated later in the year, to the wonder of those who were present.

The years 1614 and 1615 were noteworthy for an interchange of visits between the Bishop of Geneva and M. de Marquemont, Archbishop of Lyons, which led to the establishment of a House of the Visitation in that city and a very fundamental alteration in the constitution of the Order. The Bishop was received with great respect in Lyons, and the two prelates discussed the new foundation. In January the Archbishop sent one of his almoners to conduct Mme. de Chantal to Lyons to arrange for the establishment of the new house. Mme. Favre was made superior and Mme. de Blonay mistress of the novices. The Archbishop thought the time had come to make the rule more strict. He feared that on the death of the two founders the liberty the Order enjoyed might lead to abuse, and that the simple vows were not sufficient. The Bishop did not at the first fall in with the Archbishop's suggestion. There was ample evidence of the authority and value of the rules he had framed, especially in the Order connected with S. Francesca Romana at Rome. The

visitation of the sick and the relief of the poor was an essential part of his original design. He had intended the Order to combine the contemplative life of Mary with the active life of Martha. To make it an enclosed Order was to destroy its original purpose. The Archbishop went to Annecy in September 1615, to confer with him, and the weight of his influence at last determined Francis to make the suggested alteration. Cardinal Bellarmine advised him to keep to the original constitution, though he did not think that in that case it would obtain the sanction of the Holy See. It was this perhaps which at last convinced him. He drew up after deliberation with Mme. de Chantal a new constitution on the line of the rules of St Augustine, as being the gentlest and most fitting for the purpose. Widows were allowed to join the Order. He dispensed them from any but the ordinary rules of discipline, and prescribed the use only of the Little office of Our Lady. He had had bitter experience of the irreverence caused by the use of the Breviary offices when used by those who could neither recite them correctly nor understand their meaning. He obtained the approbation of the Holy See, and Paul V. confirmed the rules, and erected the Congregation into the Order of the Visitation, with the full rights and privileges of a religious Order. The Papal Brief was dated April 23, 1618, and it was published by the Bishop at Annecy, October 16, 1618.

While he was thus engaged in establishing his Order he was not indifferent to the wider interests of the Church. Three important letters in 1612, one to Cardinal Scipio Borghese, deal with the controversy which was then being carried on concerning the relative rights of the Pope and the King. His early training in law and theology, his sense of loyalty to King and

Pope, his natural gentleness and strength of character, rendered his judgments and counsel in all such disputes both sound and deep. He thought the ardour of those who discussed these questions might well be suppressed. Two points only should be maintained: "ecclesiastical and Christian unity, and the love and attachment which everyone owes to the Holy See, the very bond of this unity or communion between Christians." In a letter to a lady, he writes: "The Pope is all-sovereign Pastor and spiritual Father; the King is all-sovereign Prince and temporal Lord. The authority of one is not in any way contrary to the other. Be content with this. Be a humble spiritual daughter of the Church and the Pope. Be a humble subject and servant of the King. Pray for one and for the other, and believe firmly that in doing so you will have God for your Father and your King."<sup>1</sup>

In 1614 he received a summons from the Emperor Mathias I. to attend a Diet at Ratisbon to discuss the war with the Sultan, and to deal with the civil dissensions of the Empire. The main object was to secure the support of the Princes of the Empire to drive the Turks out of Hungary. The summons was first served on Francis as Prince of the Empire at the Episcopal Palace in Geneva, as an Imperial protest against the banishment of the Bishop from his own city. The messenger then went to Annecy. Francis replied that he would have wished to respond to the imperial command, but that the poverty to which he had been reduced by the heretics made it impossible for him either to attend the Diet or to support the Emperor with anything but his prayers. The letter is dated May 9, 1615.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. p. cxix.

## XI

1616

THE great spiritual work of the years 1608 to 1616 is the "Treatise on the Love of God." It was begun in 1609, as soon as Francis had seen the second edition of the "Devout Life" through the press. He wrote to Mme. de Chantal at the beginning of Lent: "I am going to take in hand the book on the Love of God, and I shall try to write it as much on my heart as on paper." In a letter to M. Deshayes, May 20, 1613, he writes: "I have promised the book on the Love of God to Rigaud of Lyons. If I again put my hand to the pen it will be for Paris, at your express wish." The "Devout Life" was inspired by the spiritual experience of the world gained at Paris and at Dijon. The inspiration of the "Treatise on the Love of God" was kindled by the spiritual intercourse with Mme. de Chantal, and the opportunities of spiritual instruction and meditation afforded by the devotional atmosphere of the life in the House of the Visitation at Annecy. The remarks of the physician in 1613 shows the impression which his instructions were making on the religious life of Annecy.

He used the "Devout Life" at this time in the direction of souls. He gave it to one who was newly married, writing to her, March 12, 1613: "As a rule of life I will only give that which is in this book; but if God wills that I should see you, and if you have any kind of difficulty, I will answer your questions." The correspondence with the Duc de Bellegarde is of considerable importance in reference to his new work. He was Governor of Burgundy and Bresse, and was

charged by Mary de Medici to confer with the Bishop on the affairs of Gex. He placed himself under the direction of Francis de Sales. In the first letter addressed to him, May 24, 1613, Francis addressed him as "Monsieur," repeating it again and again in token of respect for his high office. He sent him a copy of the "Devout Life," and marked chapters x.-xiii. of the second part.

A short note to Mme. de Chantal, January 11, 1614, shows that with the new year he had determined to work steadily at the "Treatise on the Love of God." "The fear and idleness of the outward man must yield to the victorious will of our Master, who wishes that, cold and icy as I am, I should write on His Holy Love. Count this day, then, as that on which I begin to employ all the moments I can spare from the pressure of my other duties, and invoke incessantly on my behalf the love of the Divine Lover."

The Duc de Bellegarde had requested him to put aside the titles of courtesy such as "Monsieur" and "Votre Grandeur," and to address him as "mon fils." In a letter of July 31, 1614, he accedes to his request, addressing him only in the opening lines, for the last time, as "Votre Grandeur," and concluding "mon cher fils." In another letter, September 12, 1614, the address is "Monsieur mon fils." A letter subsequent to September 12, 1614, connects this correspondence with the "Treatise on the Love of God": "Monsieur, il ne se peut dire de quelle ardeur mon âme souhaite la perfection de l'amour de Dieu à la vôtre." There is also an allusion to the "Devout Life" in the words: "I should hope, Monsieur, that like the famed pyraust you will remain among the flames without hurting your wings."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> "Devout Life" Preface.

He wrote from Annecy, November 7, 1614, to Mme. de la Fléchère: "The book on the Love of God is finished, but I must transcribe it before I send it to the printer." He was still working at the "Treatise" in March 1615. He wrote to Mme. de Chantal: "I am so occupied with the book that I employ upon it all the time I can well spare." In Lent 1615, he was becoming anxious and worried about it. In a letter to Mme. de Chantal, February 26, 1615, he writes: "I am doing what I can for the book. Believe me, it is a great martyrdom to me that I cannot get the time required for it. Yet I advance steadily, and I believe I shall keep my promise to my very dear mother. You are my very dear mother, altogether precious to my heart. God make you more and more altogether His own." He confesses in the Preface that he would never have carried it through without her encouragement. The Bishop of Belley says: "He told me once that fourteen lines of this book obliged him to read through twelve hundred pages of folio." And again: "He told me he had cut out half before he gave it to the public. Oh! what a loss!"<sup>1</sup> On June 3, 1615, it was so far advanced that he promised a copy to a lady.

The Preface to the "Treatise on the Love of God" is dated: "A Annecy, le jour des très amants apôtres Saint Pierre et Saint Paul, 1616." On August 16, he wrote a letter, enclosing a copy of his new book. Migne does not give more than the title: "A un ami." But the style of the letter and its address point to it as having been written to the Duc de Bellegarde, to whom he had already written on the "Love of God." The letter is so important that the following extracts are given in the original. "Il ne

<sup>1</sup> "Esprit," part iii. chap. xv.

faut jamais, certes, monsieur, puisque j'ai l'honneur que vous soyez mon très-cher fils, il ne faut point faire d'excuse quand vous ne m'écrivez pas ; car je ne puis non plus douter de votre amour filial envers moi, que je ne puis vivre sans sentir continuellement dedans mon cœur les élans de l'amour paternel envers vous . . . et moi, cependant, monsieur mon très-cher fils, afin de suppléer en quelque sorte les défauts que le manquement de commodités me pourrait faire de vous écrire souvent, je vous envoie le livre de l'Amour de Dieu, que je n'ai guère exposé aux yeux du monde, et vous supplie que si quelquefois l'affection que vous avez pour moi vous donnait quelque désir d'avoir de mes lettres, vous preniez ce traité et en lisiez un chapitre, vous imaginant que s'il n'y a point de Théotime au monde au quel s'adressent mes paroles, vous êtes celui entre tous les hommes qui êtes mon plus cher Théotime. Le Libraire a laissé couler plusieurs fautes en cette œuvre, et moi aussi plusieurs imperfections, mais s'il se trouve des besognes parfaites en ce monde, elles ne doivent pas être cherchées en ma boutique : si vous liriez celle-ci de suite, elle vous sera plus agréable à la fin."

If Mme. de Charmoisy is the Philothea of the "Devout Life," the Duc de Bellegarde may be regarded on the evidence of this letter as the Theotime of the "Treatise on the Love of God."

The book was well received. The Jesuits and the Doctors of the Sorbonne ranked it with the works of St Augustine and St Ambrose. The General of the Carthusians, Dom Bruno d'Affringues, who on the publication of the "Devout Life" had begged him never to write again, now begged of him that he would do nothing but write. James I. of England thought so highly of it that he told the English Bishops that they could produce nothing like it. "Would that I

might see the author of this angelic book ! Would that I might converse with this heavenly man ! ” St Francis, when he heard of the King’s approbation, said : “ Who will give me the wings of a dove, that I may fly to the King in that beautiful island, formerly the land of saints, to-day the abode of error ! If my prince permit it, I will arise and go to this new Nineveh, and speak to the King, and preach the truth to him at the peril of my life.”<sup>1</sup>

There was, however, some criticism. Some thought the book too theological and too metaphysical for the general reader. Others objected to the boldness of some of the metaphors. The answer was the same to both. He had written for those who had made progress in the practice of the Love of God. They would appreciate the theological character of the opening books ; they would also value the similes and recognise the true limits of their application.

## XII

1616-1622

THE last years of his life were so much occupied with the affairs of his diocese and with the work of preaching at Grenoble and Paris, that he was unable to carry out the literary plan he had set before the Archbishop of Vienne in 1609. The “ Treatise on the Love of God ” was to be followed by a treatise on the second table of the commandments. There is a reference to this in a fragment published by Migne among the “ *Pièces inédites.* ” “ *La suave amitié est une . . . réciproque et manifeste affection par laquelle nous nous souhaitons et procurons de bien les uns aux autres selon les règles de la raison et de l’honnêteté dont*

<sup>1</sup> De Baudry, “ *Memoires* ” MSS., ann. 1616. Cf. Migne.

j'ai parlé ailleurs en 'l'Introduction' et au livre de 'l'Amour du prochain.' ” The MS. in which this fragment occurs was discovered by Mgr. de Thiola, Bishop of Annecy, in an old chest. There is said to be no doubt as to its authenticity. It was written after the foundation of the Order of the Visitation, to which reference is made in the early parts of the fragment. It is addressed to Philothea and not to Theotime. Francis had told the Archbishop of Vienne that he hoped to write a Calendar for Philothea after he had finished his treatise on brotherly love. It is therefore probable that he would address this treatise to Philothea, and that the fragment in which the treatise is referred to may be a fragment of this Calendar. The greater part of the MS., however, deals with subjects which would fall under the commandments of the Second Table. The rivers of Paradise, which well out from the love of God water the four regions of human action, by prudence, justice, fortitude and temperance. The following is an important link between the two treatises: “L'amour emploie la prudence mais il la tempère tellement qu'il ne veut point qu'elle le distraie ni divertisse, parcequ'il ne veut être prudent que pour mieux aimer, et parceque l'amour divin n'est pas comme l'amour humain: l'amour humain va partout cherchant des moyens pour obtenir ce qu'il aime . . . mais l'amour divin, sachant que pour obtenir ce qu'il aime, le principal moyen est d'aimer, il s'amuse simplement a bien aimer.”<sup>1</sup> It is possible, therefore, that this MS. in part at least is a sketch of the opening chapters of the “Traité de l'amour du prochain.”

There are also passages in the “Entretiens spirituels” which would, had time permitted, have formed part of

<sup>1</sup> Migne, vol. vi. p. 10.

the same unwritten treatise. The discourse on Cordiality,<sup>1</sup> with its definition of affability and conversation; the study on Generosity in its relation to humility;<sup>2</sup> the discussion on "thine" and "mine";<sup>3</sup> that on the four kinds of modesty;<sup>4</sup> the long examination of obedience;<sup>5</sup> that on simplicity and religious prudence;<sup>6</sup> on the love of our own judgment;<sup>7</sup> and on aversion;<sup>8</sup> are all chapters of the unpublished treatise which have been applied to the special use of the sisters of the Visitation. These discourses seem to prove that he kept the treatise in his mind, but had no time to complete it. They have the same relation to it that the spiritual letters of 1604 to 1608 have to the "Devout Life." Heavy work and failing health alone prevented him from giving it definite shape and publishing it, as he had promised M. Deshayes, at Paris.

His work, after the publication of the "Love of God" became increasingly absorbing and distracting. He never again had the quiet Lent of Rumilly or the close spiritual intercourse with Mme. de Chantal which he had enjoyed in the early days of the Visitation at Annecy. He was invited by the parliament of Grenoble to preach the Advent course of 1616 and the Lenten course of 1617. He not only consented to do this, but preached the same two courses the following year at Grenoble. The Calvinists were strongly represented in the city, and it was with the special purpose of upholding the Catholic Faith and breaking down another stronghold of heresy that he consented to leave his own diocesan work. His preaching was fruitful, the Maréchal de Lesdiguières being among the number of those who submitted to the Catholic Church. It was indeed at the call of

<sup>1</sup> Entr. iv.      <sup>2</sup> Entr. v.      <sup>3</sup> Entr. viii.      <sup>4</sup> Entr. ix.  
<sup>5</sup> Entr. x.-xi.      <sup>6</sup> Entr. xii.      <sup>7</sup> Entr. xiv.      <sup>8</sup> Entr. xvi.

the Marshal that he consented to preach a second course at Grenoble.<sup>1</sup>

The summer of 1617 brought him great sorrow in the death of his brother, M. de Thorens: "Monseigneur le prince cardinal et madame le princesse l'envoyèrent visiter, et les dames de la cour lui envoyèrent des présents pour sa bouche; et enfin Mgr. le prince cardinal, après son trépas envoya douze flambeaux avec les armoires de son Altesse pour honorer son ensevelissement. Il ne se peut dire combien la pauvre petite veuve a témoigné de vertu en cette occasion. Nous la garderons ici."<sup>2</sup>

The widow, who was the daughter of Mme. de Chantal, did not long survive her husband. She died at the Visitation at Annecy early in September. "She was not the Mme. de Thorens you have seen, though she was indeed most lovable, but a Mme. de Thorens altogether dedicated to God, altogether lifted up with the purpose of living only for God, altogether full of clearness in spiritual things, and of the knowledge of God and of herself, and such as to lead us to hope that in time she would have been "une autre notre mère." She died a sister and daughter of the Visitation.<sup>3</sup> When at Grenoble the second time during the Advent of 1617, he was again very anxious about the health of Mme. de Chantal.

The last opportunity of working at the Treatise "de l'Amour du prochain" was lost when he received the command to accompany the Cardinal of Savoy to France to ask in marriage Madame Christina de France, the sister of Louis XIII. and of the future English Queen Henrietta Maria, for Victor Amedeo, Prince de Piémont, heir-presumptive of the dukedom

<sup>1</sup> Letter of April 12, 1617, to M. Milletot.

<sup>2</sup> Letter to his sister, Mme. de Cornillon, May 27, 1617.

<sup>3</sup> Letter to Mme. Favre, September 12, 1617.

of Savoy. He accepted the invitation, January 4, 1618. On January 25, 1618, in a letter to Mme. de Chantal he laments the death of his Confessor, Messire Philippe Coex, Canon and Grand Penitentiary of the Church of Geneva. He was only summoned to his death-bed in time to ask him to repeat ten or twelve times the words, "Vive Jésus!" and to declare his hope in the death of our Lord.

The summer of 1618 was spent at Annecy. His correspondence with the Mothers Superior and Sisters of the Visitation now occupied much of his time. There are many letters of this character, not only to Mme. de Chantal, but to Mme. de Brécard, Superior of the House at Moulins, to Mme. de Chastel at Grenoble, to Mme. Favre at Lyons, but to others. In view of his mission to Paris, he accepted the invitation of the Wardens of the Church of S. André des Arcs to preach the Advent course of 1618 and the Lenten course of 1619 at that church. He already felt that his work was becoming congested. "Il me tardait bien fort, ma très-chère et plus que tendre mère, de vous écrire dès ici, où je vais arrivé, grâces à Dieu, en bonne santé: mais quel moyen, je vous prie, à cet abord, par le flux et reflux de visites, et quelques affaires que j'ai trouvées pour Piémont et Italie."<sup>1</sup> And to one who had asked him to write a life of his brother, he says: "Ma vedendom, adesso tirato in Parigi, per servire il serenissimo principe cardinale nostro in questo viaggio di Francia, io perdo ogni sorte di speranza di scrivere."<sup>2</sup>

The embassy of the Cardinal of Savoy reached Paris in the early part of November 1618. His friend, Antoine Favre, describes the state entry in a

<sup>1</sup> To Mme. de Chantal, May 30, 1618.

<sup>2</sup> To a religious, Annecy, October 16, 1618.

letter to the Duke of Savoy, which shows the high esteem in which he and the Bishop were held in Paris. "Seated in the same carriage with the Bishop of Geneva, I compared my position with that in which Pliny the Younger found himself when seated alongside of Tacitus at the public games. He states that nothing had ever flattered him more than to see himself pointed out by the people as a person of rare merit, for the reason alone that a great man had thus shown him a mark of distinction and had admitted him to his intimacy. In the crowd of sightseers who pressed around us, there was no one, however little he had heard of law, theology, and jurisprudence, who did not point at us with his finger, and cried as we passed along: 'Voilà l'illustre évêque de Genève, le plus grand des théologiens de nos jours! Voilà ce président Favre, qui a publié tant d'ouvrages, et qui est devenu comme le frère de François de Sales.'"<sup>1</sup> At the close of a great life, this is the most touching testimony of the widespread influence of the Bishop, and of the lifelong fellowship of the two friends.

His first impressions were good. In a letter to Signora Scaglia of Turin, November 9, 1618, he writes: "Il rè, poi la regina, Monsieur fratello del rè, Madama maggiore et minore,<sup>2</sup> fecero con esso grandissime feste, ma sopra tutti il rè, chè tutti i suoi dicono haver fatto segni straordinari d'allegrezza. Solamente chè ho trovato Parigi con tanto accrescimento di divozione chè è un stupore e quel chè e sopra tutto il rè a un concetto tanto alto della Sma. religione cattolica, chè si ha da sperare ogni benedizione in questo regno."

The marriage agreement was concluded in December,

<sup>1</sup> Migne, vol. vi. p. 1018.

<sup>2</sup> Henrietta Maria.

and he wrote his congratulations to the Prince de Piémont. But he was unable to leave Paris for some months. His time was largely taken up during these eight months with preaching. The strain was too great, and although his friends urged him to refuse the calls made upon him, he responded to them all. "Que voulez-vous, mon cher Père," he said to Fr. Binet, "j'ai un cœur qui ne sait rien refuser au prochain, et j'ai plus tôt fait un sermon qu'un refus."

He made many friends in Paris. Vincent de Paul had been tutor to Cardinal de Retz, and was now engaged in the work which afterwards ripened into the Congregation of the Priests of the Mission. He used to say that the gentleness, the majesty, the modesty of Francis de Sales was to him a living image of the Son of God. Francis spoke of him as the saintly priest, one of the most worthy ministers of God he had ever known. He chose him as the superior of the monastery of the Visitation in Paris.

He also formed an intimate acquaintance with Mme. Angélique Arnauld, the Abbess of Port Royal, and became her spiritual adviser until his death. She was appointed Abbess coadjutrix in 1599, when only nine years old. She was consecrated Superior General in 1602. In 1608 she was awakened to a sense of her responsibility, and began at once, though only eighteen years of age, to promote the reform of the Order. She succeeded so well that in 1618 she was commissioned by the Abbot of Citeaux to take over the temporary government of the convent of Maubuisson.<sup>1</sup> It was at this period that she gained the help of Francis. He seems even then to have had fears as to her future. On one occasion, after preaching at Port Royal, he said to her: "Alas, Madame, God has revealed to

<sup>1</sup> Jarvis, "Ch. of France," vol. i. p. 311

me that your house will fall away from the Faith. The only way to preserve it is to be obedient to the Holy See." Twelve years before, the great cause of Grace and Free Will had been submitted by Paul V. to the decision of Francis de Sales and Cardinal du Perron. Although their final judgment was never promulgated, it is clear that he took up the position of Molina and the Jesuits against the more rigid Augustinianism which was afterwards advocated by the Jansenists and the Port Royalists. His intimacy with Vincent de Paul and the Arnauld family, and his insight into the different views of the leading theologians in the capital, made it clear to him that Port Royal would become the centre of Jansenism in Paris.

He also won the respect of Cardinal de Retz, Bishop of Paris. The Cardinal saw the spiritual power he was wielding in Paris. He offered him the Coadjutorship with the right of succession, and pressed him to accept it. He promised at the same time that he would secure the Bishopric of Geneva for his brother, Jean François de Sales. Francis refused. He felt his strength failing; and if Geneva was almost too much for him now, the overwhelming responsibilities of Paris would be still further beyond his power.

He left Paris on September 13, 1619. He wrote several letters to the Abbess of Port Royal during his journey south. He was at Amboise on September 22, and then travelled by way of Bourges, Moulins, and Lyons to Savoy. At Grenoble the Princesse de Piémont laid the foundation-stone of the new house of the Visitation. Shortly afterwards he received permission to retire to his diocese, on condition that his brother, Jean François de Sales, should become her almoner.

The correspondence shows that the autumn and winter of 1619 and 1620 were given to the affairs of

the diocese. He was also much occupied with the constitution and progress of the Order of the Visitation. He writes to Mme. de Chantal, alluding to the Epiphany custom of choosing a Twelfth Night King: "Je suis roi de bon jeu en votre maison, et nos sœurs en sont fort contentes." Mme. de Chantal was in Paris, and the burden of the work at Annecy fell heavily upon the Bishop. The Constitutions of the Order which he had drawn up and submitted to Paul V. had been issued with his approbation from Annecy, October 9, 1618. He revised them for publication in 1620. In a letter to Mme. de Chantal, August 7, 1620, he writes: "I have no means of sending you the Constitutions until next week; for I must revise them, having already found faults in the writing. It will be for you to see whether they shall be printed at Paris or at Lyons."

His brother, Jean François de Sales, was consecrated Coadjutor with the title of Bishop of Chalcedon at Turin on January 17, 1621, and was received with the greatest respect at Annecy. His brother everywhere gave him precedence, and when remonstrated with for showing such honour to his coadjutor he said: "He must increase and I must decrease." The newly consecrated Bishop received permission from the Court to take up his work at Annecy, and Francis at once devoted himself to the task of training him in the duties of the episcopal office. The two Bishops went carefully through the whole administrative work of the diocese, and Francis, who felt that his end was approaching, was anxious to complete, with his brother's help, all that he had himself been unable to accomplish. He may be said, indeed, to have done everything except bring about the submission of the city of Geneva, though to

the last, as his will proves, he hoped that even this might be accomplished. The zeal with which he gave himself to this labour of recapitulation added to his brother's anxiety. He urged him to be more sparing of his strength; but Francis only replied: "*Dépêchons-nous, le jour baisse, et la nuit approche.*" The words drew tears to the eyes of the Bishop of Chalcedon. Francis tenderly embraced his brother and said: "Dry these tears, my dear brother. They are not fitting for a Christian, much less for a Bishop. It is only for infidels who have no part in a better life to be troubled over the loss of this."

The harvest failed in the summer of 1621; famine and trouble threatened the Diocese. The health of the Bishop was rapidly failing. He visited Thonon, the scene of his former labours, and on his return stayed at the Château de Brens, with his cousin Gaspar de Sales. His pains were so great that he could scarcely master them. "I feel something here," he said, putting his hand to his chest, "which tells me I have not long to live." The winter was severe, and yet he relaxed nothing of his simplicity of life, and gave all that he had for the relief of his people in their great distress. "*Que voulons-nous, ma très-chère mère,*" he writes September 20, 1621, "*sinon ce que Dieu veut! Laissons le conduire notre âme, qui est sa barque; il la fera surgir à bon port.*" . . . "*Dieu vous remplisse de plus en plus de son très-saint amour.*"

The claims of the Court took him away again from the Diocese during the last year of his life. He recognised their claims to the fullest, but used the opportunity they afforded him of setting an example of gentleness and humility, his two characteristic virtues, amid the pride and vanity of Court life. His

duties as Grand Almoner of the Princesse de Piémont called him to Turin in the spring. He was again taken seriously ill, and it was not until August that he returned to Annecy. He had been commanded to attend the duke in the late autumn to take part in the greeting of the French king after the suppression of the rebellion of the heretics of the South of France. His friends endeavoured to dissuade him from the journey, but he regarded it as his duty to struggle on to the end. He wrote to Mme. de Chantal from Annecy, October 22, 1622: "Il vous faut dire, ma très-chère mère, que ce matin, étant un peu en solitude, j'ai fait un acte de résignation nonpareil, mais que je ne puis écrire, et que je réserve pour vous dire de bouche, quand Dieu me fera la grâce de vous voir. . . . Plaise à sa divine bonté continuer sur moi cette abondance de courage pour son honneur et gloire, et pour la perfection et excellence de cette très-incomparable unité de cœur, qu'il lui a plu nous donner. Amen. Vive Jésus!" It is the last letter to her which is preserved. He thanks God at the end of it that he is well in health.

Yet on November 6, 1622, he made his will, giving instructions for his burial, either in the Cathedral Church at Geneva, if it were restored to the Catholic religion, or in the nave of the Church of the Visitation at Annecy. If he died outside his Diocese, the decision was to lie with those who attended him. The thirteen candles round the hearse were to have shields, with no armorial bearings but the Name of Jesus only.

On the morning of the departure for Avignon he celebrated at the Visitation, and gave the sisters his last blessing. He told them he should not see them again, and begged them to pray God have pity on his soul. He gave his last farewell and blessing to his

brother, the Bishop of Chalcedon, and left Annecy for Seyssel in the company of his clergy and his brother Janus. He was welcomed at the riverside villages, and reached Avignon the evening before Louis XIII. made his state entry. The Duke of Savoy arrived on November 17, and held many secret conferences with the king. The two Courts left Avignon for Lyons on the 23rd, and Francis followed. He talked on the way with two Calvinist gentlemen, and at Pont Saint Esprit their friends said: "If all the Bishops were like this one, we should soon be all Catholics, and the religion of Luther and Calvin would disperse in smoke!"

At Lyons the highest dignitaries offered him hospitality. He preferred, however, to lodge in a little room in the house of the gardener of the Visitation. He spent Advent in the practice of devotional exercises, and in teaching and preaching. The addresses which he gave at the Visitation were published under the title of "*Entretiens Spirituels*" by the Mother Superior, Mme. de Blonay.

Madame de Chantal visited Lyons on her return from Paris and Dijon. She wished to speak to the Bishop as to her spiritual direction. He bid her, however, give him a review of the work of the Order: "*Je croyais vous trouver tout angélique. Nous ne parlerons point de vous ici, nous ne parlerons que de ce que concerne notre congrégation, dont-il faut achever les affaires. Oh! que j'aime notre petit institut, parce que Dieu y est beaucoup aimé!*" The interview lasted four hours, and early the following morning she left for Grenoble and Valence. It was the last interview of the two friends, the last unselfish intercourse in that saintly fellowship which bore such rich fruit in the spiritual life of France and Savoy.

On Christmas Eve he preached on the Nativity ; on Christmas Day he confessed the Prince and Princess of Piedmont, and said the mass at which they communicated. In the afternoon he gave the habit to two of the daughters of the Visitation, and held much spiritual intercourse with them. He repeated again and again the maxim : “ Ne rien demander, ne rien refuser ; ” and when he was asked to write on a sheet of paper what he further required of them, he took up the pen and wrote the single word “ Humilité.” It was the sum of all his instructions, and the last counsel he left with them.

His humility and his gentleness had kept his life sweet amid the vanity of the courts of Turin and Paris. In one of his last letters, written to a lady on December 19, 1622, he says : “ Mon Dieu ! que bien heureux sont ceux qui, désengagés des cours et des compliments qui y régnernt, vivent paisiblement dans la sainte solitude aux pieds du crucifix ! Certes, j’eus jamais bonne opinion de la vanité ; mais je la trouve encore bien plus vaine parmi les faibles grandeurs de la cour. Ma très-chère fille, plus je vais en avant dans la vue de cette mortalité, plus je la trouve méprisable, et toujours plus aimable la sainte éternité à laquelle nous aspirons, et pour laquelle nous nous devons uniquement aimer. Vivons seulement pour cette vie, ma très-chère fille, qui seule mérite le nom de vie en comparaison de laquelle la vie des grands de ce monde est une très-misérable mort.” They are amongst his last written words. The “ Philothea ” lays down the rule only for the Introduction to the “ Devout Life.” This latter is his last earnest appeal for the Life itself.

One last precious fragment, dated Christmas Day, exists in a letter to the Superior of the Visitation at Nevers. Life in the Love of God is the true end of

the Devout Life. "Vivez toute en Dieu, ma très-chère fille, et pour Dieu, que je supplie vous recevoir dans le sein de sa très-sainte dilection, avec toute votre chère compagnie."

On St John's Day he felt weaker. He said mass in the morning, and on his return met the Duc de Bellegarde, Governor of Burgundy, his cher Théotime, and M. de Villeroi, Governor of Lyons. He conversed with them some time bare-headed in the piercing cold. He then went to see the Duc de Nemours, and as he was leaving Lyons the following day he also visited the Prince and Princess of Piedmont. He was very tired, so tired indeed that he remained sitting in his chair instead of accompanying his visitors to the door. After dinner his servant spoke of a sermon in which the preacher had recommended the queen to love her servants. "And you, my friend, do you love me well?" Tears were the only reply the servant could give. "And I too love you well," said the Bishop; "but before all we must love God, who is our master." Francis then fainted, and soon after a stroke of apoplexy paralysed his whole body. The Rector of the Jesuits came at once and ministered to him, receiving his profession of faith and his confession of sin, and giving him extreme unction. Sickness made it impossible to give him the Blessed Sacrament.

Early in the morning the Bishop of Damascus came to help him in the last combat. The Duc of Nemours came with his son, the Prince de Genevois, to receive the blessing of the dying Bishop. Mme. Olier also brought her children, among them Jean Jacques, afterwards the founder of the Priests of S. Sulpice.

His last words to his faithful friend and old servant Georges Rolland, were: "Vivez tous en paix et dans la crainte de Dieu." He lingered through the night,

suffering greatly from the violent remedies with which the doctors endeavoured to overcome his drowsiness. He was asked if he felt the pain : "Yes, I feel it, but do as you wish to the sick man." Before he lost consciousness for the last time, he pressed the hand of one of his own friends, and said : "*Advesperascit, et inclinata est jam dies.*"<sup>1</sup> He then again repeated the sacred name of Jesus. He died at eight o'clock in the evening, at the age of fifty-five, on Holy Innocents' Day, December 28, 1622, whilst they were reciting the words of the Litany : "*Omnes sancti Innocentes, orate pro eo.*"

The body was embalmed, and the funeral mass was said in the Church of the Visitation on December 30. On the following day Georges Rolland made preparations for conveying it to Annecy. He was stopped by order of M. Olier, on behalf of the people of Lyons. It was only after correspondence between the Duke of Savoy and the King of France that permission was finally given by Louis XIII. to remove the body. It left Lyons on January 18, 1623, and was buried in the Church of the Visitation at Annecy, January 29, 1623.

The brief of his beatification by Pope Alexander VII. is dated December 28, 1661, and January 29 was appointed for his festival. His Canonisation took place April 19, 1665, the Sunday of the Good Shepherd. He was declared a Doctor of the Church in the Vatican Council by a decree of Pope Pius IX., July 19, 1877.

The testimony of the Church to his life and work is expressed in the words of the Decree of 1877. "*Collaudabunt multi sapientiam ejus, et usque in saeculum non delebitur, non recedet memoria ejus et*

<sup>1</sup> St Luke xxiv. 29 : "It is toward evening and the day is far spent."

nomen ejus requiretur a generatione in generationem; sapientiam ejus enarrabunt gentes et laudem ejus enuntiabit Ecclesia.”<sup>1</sup>

## ORATIO.

“Deus, qui ad animarum salutem beatum Franciscum Confessorem tuum atque Pontificem, omnibus omnia factum esse voluisti: concede propitius, ut charitatis tue dulcedine perfusi, ejus dirigentibus monitis, ac suffragantibus meritis, aeterna gaudia consequamur. Per Dominum nostrum Jesum Christum, Amen.”

*P.S.*—Camille Benson de Cavour, the Maker of Italy, was through his mother Adelaide de Sales, a direct descendant of Louis de Sales, one of the younger brothers of St Francis de Sales. Her father, Paul François, was great-great-grandson of Louis de Sales. Cavour inherited the liberal and administrative qualities of M. de Boisy, as well as some of the genial character of Mme. de Boisy. “He made Italy; the inception, the inspiration were not his; but his were the consummate statesmanship, the unbending activity, the resourceful daring, that accomplished the seemingly impossible.”<sup>2</sup> The same qualities restored the Chablais to the Church. “Nothing can obscure the tolerant, genial, humane spirit, which had no room for pride and pettiness, which hardly ever allowed personal rancour to guide it, which through all its devotion to Italy, never lost sight of the bigger welfare of humanity.”<sup>3</sup> May the Italian devotion to Cavour

<sup>1</sup> Eccles. xlv. 15. “The people will tell of his wisdom, and the Church will shew forth his praise.”

<sup>2</sup> Bolton King, *Hist. of Italian Unity*, vol. ii., p. 218.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* p. 219.

lead the Italian people to a renewed devotion to St Francis de Sales, that the unity given to the nation by the statesmanship of Cavour may bring them to an appreciation of the spiritual unity of Church and State which was so near the heart of St Francis.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Cf.* Introd. p. xcix.: "The authority of one is not in any way contrary to the other."

The following bibliographical notes are due to the kindness of Monsieur Léopold Delisle, Librarian of the Bibliothèque Nationale of Paris, and Mr F. Madan, the Sub-Librarian of the Bodleian Library at Oxford.

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## TRANSLATOR'S NOTE

THE translation has been made from the 1619 edition of the "Introduction à la vie dévote du Bien-heureux François de Sales, Evesque et Prince de Genève, Instituteur de l'ordre de la Visitation de Sainte Marie, reveuë par l'auteur avant son deceds," revised and corrected by M. Silvestre de Sacy, member of the French Academy, and published in two volumes by Techener of Paris in 1860. It differs but little, except in its Old French, from the edition published by Migne in the third volume of the "Life and Works of St Francis" in 1861. No attempt has been made by the translator either to abridge it or to adapt it. No translation can do justice to its original. It has, however, been the endeavour of the translator both to be loyal to the simplicity of the French and at the same time to preserve the rhythm of the English language. He is, however, conscious that though he has tried to be faithful to the French, he has not always been able to be faithful to the English.

The quotations from the Vulgate and the Fathers have been given in the Latin, the references to the lives of the Saints in Latin, French, and Italian. It is thought that those who wish to use the notes will derive more pleasure from reading them in the originals which St Francis had probably before him; and those

who do not wish to use them will have less scruple in passing them over.

The illustrations are drawn mainly from three sources, the "Spiritual Letters" of St Francis de Sales, the "Spiritual Combat," and the "Holy Living" of Jeremy Taylor.

The "Introduction to the Devout Life" is a landmark in the literature of devotion. In the earlier books, therefore, reference has been made to the contemporary letters of St Francis to show that the correspondence with Madame de Charmoisy was only a portion of his correspondence on the subject of the "Devout Life," and that he gave to others the same counsels and recommended the same manuals of devotion which he gives in the "Introduction."

St Francis himself acknowledges the debt he owed to his "dear book," the "Spiritual Combat." It has, therefore, been thought good to refer to it freely where the spiritual counsels of the "Devout Life" are clearly derived from the earlier treatise.

The "Holy Living" of Bishop Jeremy Taylor holds a similar position to the "Devout Life" in the devotional writings of the Church of England. It differs much in its illustrative matter, but in its spiritual counsels it frequently agrees with the work of St Francis. In one place the author acknowledges his use of the "Devout Life," referring to it by its French title. The "Holy Living" has for this reason been also used freely in illustration to show that the truths of spiritual experience and the precepts of the spiritual life are the common heritage of the Church of Christ.

The "Spiritual Combat," like the "Imitation of Jesus Christ," lays down the first principles of the devotional life. The "Devout Life" brings these principles

home to the spiritual needs of the Church of France in the early years of the seventeenth century, the "Holy Living" to the spiritual needs of the Church of England half a century later. They are all alike of the highest value to the building up of the spiritual life in the Church to-day.

Whatever may be the shortcomings of this translation, if it draws the reader again to the familiar pages of the "Imitation," the "Spiritual Combat," and the "Holy Living," the translator will feel that it has not been made in vain, and in this hope he submits it humbly to the judgment of the Holy Catholic Church.

HILDERSTONE VICARAGE,  
*Conversion of St Paul, 1904.*



## NOTICE FOR THE SECOND EDITION TO THE READER

MY DEAR READER,—

The second edition represents this little book to thee revised, corrected, and augmented with several chapters and things of note. I have not enriched it with any quotations as some desired me to do, because the learned have no need of them, and others do not care for them.<sup>1</sup> When I use the words of Holy Scripture, it is not always to explain them, but to explain myself by them as being more venerable and acceptable to good souls. I tell thee the rest in the preface.

Our Lord be with thee.

<sup>1</sup> “Our experience in editions leads us to think that the quotation of passages of Scripture and of the holy Fathers may be most useful. Given in the form of notes, they arrest the attention of the reader who wishes to neglect them, and they are useful to him who wishes to consult them.”—Migne. “Ouvr. comp. de S. Franc.,” vol. iii. p. 10.



## ANOTHER NOTICE TO THE READER

THIS little book leaves my hands in the year 1608.

In its second edition it was increased by several chapters; but three of those which were in the first were overlooked by mistake. Since then it has been often printed without my knowledge, and with these reprints the faults have been multiplied. But now behold it newly corrected, with all its chapters, but still without quotations, because the learned have no need of them, and others do not care for them. When I use the words of Scripture, it is not always to explain them, but to explain myself by them, as more acceptable and hallowed. If God hears me, thou wilt indeed derive profit from it, and receive more blessings.



## DEDICATORY PRAYER

O BLESSED JESUS, my Lord, my Saviour, and my God, behold I lie prostrate before Thy Majesty, dedicating and consecrating this work to Thy Glory. Quicken with Thy blessing the words which are in it, that the souls for whom I have written it may receive from it the holy inspirations which I desire for them; particularly that of imploring on my behalf Thy boundless mercy that, showing to others the way of devotion in this world, I may not be reproved and confounded eternally in the other, but may sing with them for ever as a hymn of triumph the words which I utter with all my heart in witness of my faithfulness amid the chances of this mortal life: "Glory be to JESUS! Glory be to JESUS!"<sup>1</sup> Yea, O Lord JESUS, live and reign in our hearts for ever and ever. AMEN.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. part i. chap. xviii. ; part iii. chap. xxiii. ; part v. chap. xviii., and Letters *passim*. The words "Vive JESUS" are used by St Francis as a kind of seal, like the "Gesù dolce, Gesù amore" of the Letters of St Catherine of Siena. The "Viva! Viva! Jesu" of the Italian hymn which appears among the *Aspirazioni Devote* of an Italian "Raccolta," and which has by some been ascribed to the eighteenth century, by others attributed to St Alfonso Liguori, represents the "Vive JESUS! Vive JESUS" of St Francis. Mr Caswall's translation, "Glory be to Jesus," so familiar in our hymn-books, has been chosen as the rendering throughout the introduction. The letters of Bishop Ken from 1687 to 1709 almost always begin with the words: "All glory be to God."



## PREFACE

MY DEAR READER,—

I bid thee read this preface for thy satisfaction and for mine.

The flower-girl Glycera<sup>1</sup> knew so well how to vary the arrangement and intermingling of her flowers that with the same flowers she made a great variety of nosegays; so that the painter Pausias, in his desire to rival her in imitating this variety of her work, was at a standstill, for he could not change his painting in so many ways as Glycera made her nosegays. So the Holy Spirit disposes and arranges the lessons of devotion which He gives by the tongue and pen of His servants with so much variety that, though the doctrine is always the same, the instructions which are made from it differ much according to the various ways in which they are composed. I indeed can only write, and only wish to write, and only ought to write in this Introduction what has already been published by my predecessors in this subject.<sup>2</sup> They are the same

<sup>1</sup> Glycera was a garland-maker of Sicyone in Greece. Pausias represented her in a famous painting known as the Stephanoplokon. Skilful in their several arts, Pausias could with difficulty keep pace with the variety of her garlands: "Ex ingenio Pausiæ pictoris atque Glyceræ coronariæ, dilectæ admodum illi, cum opera ejus pictura imitaretur, et illa provocans variaret, essetque certamen artis ac naturæ" (Plin. Hist. Nat., xxi. 3).

<sup>2</sup> In a letter to Mme. de Chantal, July 1607, he speaks of

flowers which I present to thee, my reader, but the nosegay I have made of them will be different from theirs, because of the difference in the arrangement with which it has been made.

Those who have written on devotion<sup>1</sup> have nearly all in view the instruction of persons far removed from the society of the world, or at least have taught a method of devotion which leads to this complete retirement. My intention is to instruct those who live in town, at home, in court, who by their position are obliged to live to all outward appearance an ordinary life, and who often, under the pretext of pretended impossibility, do not even wish to think of undertaking the devout life. They are of opinion that, as no animal dare taste the seed of the herb called Palma Christi,<sup>2</sup> so no man ought to aspire to the palm of Christian piety whilst he lives amid the pressure of temporal

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the "Spiritual Combat" as "my dear book." He says he had carried it in his pocket for eighteen years. He had received it from Fr. Scupoli when at Padua in 1589. Another book he probably knew at Padua was the treatise of Fr. Luis de Granada on the Love of God, an Italian translation of which was published at Venice in 1581. In the course of the Introduction he makes mention of many others.

<sup>1</sup> "Although this book, inasmuch as it treats of the perfection of the Love of God, pertains principally to religious persons, who, by reason of their condition, are obliged to walk in the way of perfection, yet there are not wanting many outside this condition who walk in the same way with great gravity of life, without being pledged to it" (Luis de Granada, Preface to "Love of God").

<sup>2</sup> "Ricinus, Palma Christi or Kik." "The seed of Palma Christi or rather Kik is hot and dry in the third degree." "Ricinus, his seed taken inwardly openeth the belly, and causeth vomit, drawing slimy flegme and choler from the places possessed therewith" (Gerarde, Herball, 1597). The name is given to the castor-oil plant, *Ricinus communis*, in the Mediterranean countries.

affairs. And I will show them that as the pearl-oyster lives in the sea without absorbing a drop of salt-water, and that near the Chelidonian Isles,<sup>1</sup> there are springs of water which are quite sweet in the midst of the sea, and that there are moths<sup>2</sup> which fly in the flame without burning their wings, so can a strong and steadfast soul live in the world without receiving any worldly taint, can find the springs of a sweet piety amid the bitter waves of this world, can fly amid the flames of earthly lusts without burning the wings of the holy desires of the devout life. It is true that this is hard, and it is for this reason I would desire that more persons should bestow their care on it with greater fervour than they have yet shown. Feeble as I am, I will try in this work to give some help to those, who, with a generous heart, will make this worthy effort.

But for all that it has not been by my choice or inclination that this Introduction goes forth to the public. A soul,<sup>3</sup> full of honour and of virtue, having some time since received grace from God to wish to aspire to the devout life, desired my special assistance

<sup>1</sup> The Insulæ Chelidoniæ lie off the SE. promontory of Lycia. "*Dulcis haustus in mari plurimis locis, ut ad Chelidonias insulas*" (Plin. Hist. Nat., ii. 106). There is a freshwater spring on the Skerries off Anglesey.

<sup>2</sup> *Les pyraustes*: translated "fireflies" by some, possibly a large species of moth. Pliny describes them as flies of a large size like winged beasts: "*In Cypri ærariis fornacibus, et medio igni, majoris muscæ magnitudinis velut pennatum quadrupes; appellatur Pyralis, a quibusdam Pyrausta, quamdiu est in igne, vivit; cum evasit longiore paulo volatu emoritur*" (Plin. Hist. Nat., xi. 42).

<sup>3</sup> Madame de Charmoisy, a lady of high position in Paris, was present at a sermon preached by St Francis, the 24th January 1605. She placed herself under his direction, and received from him the spiritual counsel and advice which was afterwards published under the name of the "Introduction to the Devout Life" (Migne, vol. i. 657).

in this matter. I, who in many ways was under obligation to her, and who had long noticed in her much disposition for this undertaking, was most anxious to give her good instruction; and having led her by all such devotional exercises as were suitable to her desires and her position, I left her some notes in writing that she might refer to them as she needed. She has since communicated them to one<sup>1</sup> of great learning and devotion, who, thinking that many persons might profit by them, has urgently requested me to publish them. It was the more easy for him to persuade me, because his friendship had great influence over my will, and his judgment a great authority over mine.

Now in order that the whole might be useful and acceptable, I have revised it and have put into it some sort of order, adding several counsels and instructions which are suitable for my purpose. But I have done all this with scarcely any leisure at all. For this reason thou wilt see in it nothing exact, but only a collection of admonitions given in good faith, which I explain in words which are clear and intelligible, or at least have desired to do so. And as to the rest of the ornaments of language, I have not given a thought to them, having plenty of other things to do.

I address my words to Philothea, because, wishing to turn to the common advantage of many words

<sup>1</sup> Fr. Forrier, rector of the Jesuit College at Chambéry, who became acquainted with Madame de Charmois when she was staying at Chambéry. She showed to him the scattered notes and instructions of St Francis, and he, impressed with their great spiritual value, approached St Francis with a view to their publication. He was also encouraged in it by Henry IV. of France (Migne, vol. i. 658).

which I had at first written for one only, I call her by the name common to all who wish to be devout, for Philothea means a lover of God or one in love with Him.

Having in my mind in all this a soul desirous of devotion, who aspires to the love of God, I have composed this Introduction in five parts. In the first of them I endeavour by certain counsels and exercises to convert the simple desire of Philothea into a complete resolution, which she makes at the end after her general confession, by a steadfast declaration, followed by the most Blessed Sacrament, in which she gives herself to her Saviour and receives Him and so happily enters into His holy love. This done, to lead her further, I show to her two great means of uniting herself more and more with His Divine Majesty; the use of the Sacraments, by which God in His goodness comes to us, and holy prayer, by which He draws us to Himself. And in this I employ the second part. In the third I show her how she ought to exercise herself in several virtues which are proper to her advancement, though only treating of certain particular counsels which she could not receive elsewhere or of her own self. In the fourth I expose certain ambushes of her enemies and show her how to escape them and go forward on her way. And lastly, in the fifth part, I make her withdraw a little apart by herself, to refresh herself, to take breath, and to restore her powers, that she may be able afterwards more happily to gain ground, and make further progress in the devout life.

This age is very capricious, and I foresee that several will say that it only pertains to the Religious and to persons of devotion to give such special directions to piety; that they require more leisure

than a Bishop charged with so large a diocese<sup>1</sup> as mine can give; that it too much distracts the understanding, which ought to be given to important matters.

But as for myself my dear reader, I say to thee with the great St Denis<sup>2</sup> that it belongs especially to Bishops to perfect souls; that whereas their order is supreme among men, as that of the Seraphim among the Angels, so their leisure cannot be better employed than in this duty. The ancient Bishops and Fathers of the Church were at least as zealous of their charges as we are, and yet did not neglect the particular care of the souls who asked for their help. It is evident from their letters,<sup>3</sup> that in this they imitated the Apostles, who in the general harvest of the world gathered certain choice ears of corn, with special and particular affection. Who is ignorant that Timothy,<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The Diocese of Geneva included not only the city of Geneva but the district of the Genevois, stretching south as far as Annecy, the Pays de Gex between Geneva and the Jura, the Chablais lying along the south of the lake of Geneva as far as St Gingolph and up the Drance valleys, and Faucigny between the Chablais and the Alps, including the valley of the Arne and the Foren, and extending to the valley of Chamounix. At the flight of Bishop de la Baume, in July 1533, and the establishment of Protestant rule in the city, the seat of the Bishopric was transferred in 1534 to Gex. In the year 1535, the Syndics having prohibited the Grand Vicar and the Chapter from celebrating mass in the Cathedral and the other churches of the city the Chapter withdrew to Annecy, which henceforth became the seat of the Bishop.

<sup>2</sup> Pseudo-Dionysius Areopagita, c. 530, "Est pontificatus seu episcopalis ordo, qui consummante virtute fultus perficientia quæque sacri ordinis munia præeminente consummat atque sacrorum disciplinas interpretando tradit" (De Eccles., chap. v. 86).

<sup>3</sup> St Ambrose, St Augustine, St Jerome, St Bernard.

<sup>4</sup> 1 Tim i. 18, "Hoc preceptum commendo tibi fili Timothee."

Titus,<sup>1</sup> Philemon,<sup>2</sup> Onesimus,<sup>3</sup> St Thecla,<sup>4</sup> Appia,<sup>5</sup> were the dear children of the great St Paul, as St Mark<sup>6</sup> and St Petronilla<sup>7</sup> were of St Peter? I mention St Petronilla because Baronius<sup>8</sup> and Galonius<sup>9</sup> prove with great learning that she was not St Peter's daughter after the flesh, but only after the spirit. And did not St John write one of his canonical Epistles to the devout Lady Electa?<sup>10</sup>

It is a labour, I confess, to direct souls in particular; but a labour which is refreshing like that of the labourers in the harvest and the vineyard, who are never more content than when they are fully employed and occupied. It is a work which eases and quickens the heart by the sweetness which it brings to those who undertake it, like the cinnamon to those who

<sup>1</sup> Titus i. 4, "Tito dilecto filio."

<sup>2</sup> Philemon i, 7, "Philemoni dilecto," "frater."

<sup>3</sup> Philemon io, "Pro meo filio Onesimo."

<sup>4</sup> Thecla belonged to a noble family of Iconium. The Acts of Paul and Thecla are based upon a document of the first century, and contain valuable witness to St Paul's first visit to Iconium (Ramsay's "Church in Rom. Emp.," chap. xvi.).

<sup>5</sup> Philemon 2, "Appiæ sorori charissimæ."

<sup>6</sup> I St Peter v. 13, "Marcus filius meus."

<sup>7</sup> AURELIÆ PETRONILLÆ FIL. DULCISSIMÆ. Inscription on the sarcophagus of St Petronilla from the cemetery of Domitilla on the Via Ardentina. She belonged to the Roman family Aurelia, related to the Flavian house. Her name Petronilla is connected with Petro, a name used in the family of the Flavians. "She may have been some scion of the Flavian house, who, like her relations, Fl. Clemens and Fl. Domitilla, became a convert to Christianity" (Marucchi, *Les Catacombes Romaines*, p. 111; Lightfoot, *St Clement*, vol. i. 38, 43).

<sup>8</sup> Baronius, *Annal.* 69, xxxiii.

<sup>9</sup> Galonius, an Oratorian, died 1605. In 1591 he published "*Istoria delle Vergine Romane.*"

<sup>10</sup> 2 St John v. 1, "Senior Electæ dominæ,"

carry it in Arabia Felix. It is said<sup>1</sup> that the tigress takes up the whelp which she finds left on the road by the hunter who wishes to stop her while he is carrying away the rest of the litter, and however big it may be, she is not in any way overburdened by it, but bravely carries it that she may bring it safely to her den, since natural love eases her in the burden. How much more willingly will a fatherly heart take in charge a soul which he finds with the desire of holy perfection, and carry it in his bosom as a mother does her little child, without being conscious of the well-loved burden?

But there must be the fatherly heart. This is why the Apostles and Apostolic men call their disciples not only their children, but still more tenderly their little children.<sup>2</sup>

For the rest, my dear reader, it is true that I write of the Devout Life without being devout, though certainly not without the desire of becoming so. It is this good will which gives me courage to instruct thee. For as a great man of letters said,<sup>3</sup> "A good method of learning is to study; a better to listen; the best to teach." It often happens, says St Augustine, writing to his devout Florentina,<sup>4</sup> that the office of giving serves as a merit for receiving, and the office of instructing serves as a foundation for learning.

Alexander caused the beautiful Campaspe, who was very dear to him, to be painted by the hand of the

<sup>1</sup> Pliny, *Hist. Nat.*, viii. 25.

<sup>2</sup> Gal. iv. 19; 1 St Jno. v. 21, "*Filioli mei*"; "*Filioli.*"

<sup>3</sup> Erasmus, "*Quidam apprime litteratus (is est Erasmus) aiebat optimam discendi et ad eruditionem perveniendi rationem esse, si quis doceat.*"

St Francis de Sales, "*Treatise on Preaching*" (Art. ii., Migne, vol. iv. p. 649).

<sup>4</sup> "*Sæpe officium impertiendi meritum est accipiendi*" (St Aug. ad Flor., tom. ii. p. 899).

renowned Apelles. Apelles, forced to look closely at Campaspe, in proportion as he expressed her features on his picture, impressed an affection for her in his heart, and became so passionately attached to her that Alexander, recognising it and pitying him, gave her up to him in marriage, depriving himself for love of him of the dearest friend he had in the world. And in this, says Pliny,<sup>1</sup> he showed the greatness of his heart as much as he had done by his greatest victory. I am indeed of opinion, my reader, my friend, that being a bishop, God wishes that I should paint on the hearts of men not only the ordinary virtues, but also the devotion which is so dear and so well-pleasing to Him. And I indeed undertake it willingly, as much to obey Him and to do my duty as with the hope that while I impress this devotion on the spirit of others, my own may perchance become in love with it. Now if ever the divine Majesty sees me intensely taken with it, He will give it to me in eternal wedlock.

The beautiful and chaste Rebecca, after watering the camels of Isaac, was destined to be his bride, receiving from him the earrings and bracelets of gold ;<sup>2</sup> so do I hope that in the immense goodness of God, when He guides His dear sheep to the saving waters of devotion, so He will make my soul His bride, placing in my ears the golden words of His holy lore, and on my arms the power to put them in force. In this power lies the essence of true devotion, which I pray Him to grant to me and to all the children of

<sup>1</sup> Plin. Hist. Nat., xxxv. 36. Apelles (B.C. 336-323) was one of the most famous Greek painters. Campaspe is said to have been the model for the Venus Anadyomene.

<sup>2</sup> Gen. xxiv. 22, "Post quam autem biberunt cameli, protulit vir in aures aureas."

His Church—a Church to which I wish always to submit my writings, my actions, my words, my wishes, my thoughts.

At Annecy, St Mary Magdalen's Day,  
one thousand six hundred and eight.

## LETTERS PERMISSORY

YE souls who are harsh towards devotion, and not making a practice of it jeer at those who bathe themselves in it, here is something worthy of being read to give you a taste for it. And you, devout souls, who gently taste the sweet fruits which the tree of piety and devotion bears, read this book, and you will find in it what will give you satisfaction, and you will see that in it there shines the zeal and the affection of the most reverend author for that salvation of souls for which the Holy Faith so often prepares the way. And the book proposes nothing which is not in conformity with the Faith and with the holy Christian, Catholic, Apostolic, and Roman Church.<sup>1</sup> Given at Lyons the 4th of August 1608.

BROTHER ROBERT BERTHELOT, Bishop of Damascus, Suffragan of Lyons.

BROTHER STEPHEN CARTA, Doctor of Theology and Prior of the Convent of our Lady of Comfort.

In consideration of the attestation of the Doctors of Theology above-signed, it is permitted to print the

<sup>1</sup> This and the following letters permissory are printed neither in De Sacy's edition nor in Migne. They have been translated from an edition published at Paris by Charles Angot in 1667, an edition which does not appear in the list of editions in the National Library at Paris. The original text is given in the Introduction.

present "Introduction to the Devout Life." At Lyons, the 8th of September, 1608.

CHALOM., V. G.

In consideration of the foregoing attestations, we have permitted this present book to be printed, in which the author will be found as he is in his life, his ordinary actions being full of the profound piety which he teaches others in this book. Given at Lyons, the 8th of September 1608.

DE MONTOLON.

# THE FIRST PART OF THE INTRODUCTION

CONTAINING

COUNSELS AND EXERCISES REQUISITE TO GUIDE THE SOUL  
FROM ITS FIRST DESIRE FOR THE DEVOUT LIFE TO  
A FULL RESOLUTION TO EMBRACE IT

## CHAPTER I

### *Description of True Devotion.*

YOU aspire to devotion, dearest Philothea, because being a Christian you know that it is a virtue exceedingly well-pleasing to the Divine Majesty. But inasmuch as the little faults which we commit at the beginning of any matter increase infinitely as it goes on, and are almost irreparable at the end, you should know before all things what is the nature of devotion. For as there is a true devotion and a great deal which is false and vain, if you do not know which is the true, you may be mistaken, and spend your time in following some devotion which is foolish and superstitious.

Arelius<sup>1</sup> used to make all the faces of the pictures which he painted to resemble the women whom he loved; and every one paints devotion according to his passion and fancy. He who devotes himself to fasting

<sup>1</sup> "Fuit et Arelius Romæ celeber paulo ante Augustum"  
(Plin. Hist. Nat., xxxv. 37).

will consider himself very devout provided that he is fasting, although his heart may be full of spite; and though he dare not dip his tongue in wine nor even in water for sobriety's sake, he will not scruple to plunge it in the blood of his neighbour for the sake of slander and calumny. Another will think himself devout because he says a great number of prayers every day, although when they are over, his tongue is employed in vexatious, arrogant, and injurious language amongst his servants and neighbours. Another draws a coin very willingly from his pocket to give to the poor, but cannot draw the sweetness from his heart to pardon his enemies. Another will pardon his enemies, but will never make satisfaction to his creditors except by sheer force of justice. All these are commonly regarded as devout, though they are not so in any way. The messengers of Saul searched for David in his house; Michal, having placed an image in the bed, and covered it with David's garment, made them believe it was David himself who lay ill.<sup>1</sup> So do many persons cover themselves with certain outward actions belonging to holy devotion; and the world believes that they are really devout and spiritual, whereas in truth they are only images and phantoms of devotion.

True and living devotion, Philothea, presupposes the love of God. It is indeed nothing else but a true love of God. And yet not a love of any kind; for divine love, so far as it beautifies our soul, is called grace, and makes us acceptable to the Divine Majesty; so far as it gives us the power to do well, it is called charity;

<sup>1</sup> 1 Kings (1 Sam.) xix. 11, "Misit ergo Saul satellites suas in domum David, ut custodirent eum." xix. 13, "Tulit autem Michol statuam et posuit eam super lectum, et pellem pilosam caprarum posuit ad caput ejus, et operuit eam vestimentis." xix. 14, "Misit autem Saul apparitores, qui raperent David: et responsum est quod ægrotaret."

but when it has arrived at that degree of perfection at which it makes us not only do well, but work carefully, frequently, and promptly, it is called devotion. Ostriches never fly; fowls fly heavily, always low down, and rarely; but eagles, doves, and swallows fly often, and fly swiftly and on high. So likewise sinners do not fly to God, but keep always an earthly course and live for the earth. Good men who have not yet attained to devotion fly to God by good deeds, but rarely, slowly, and heavily. Devout persons fly to God frequently, promptly, and on high. In short, devotion is nothing else than spiritual agility and vivacity by means of which charity does its work within us, or we through it, promptly and heartily; and as it pertains to charity to make us practise all the commandments of God, generally and universally, so it pertains to devotion to make us do it promptly and diligently. It is for this reason that he who does not keep all the commandments of God can neither be considered good nor devout; for to be good, he must have charity, and to be devout he must have in addition to charity a great vivacity and promptitude in the works of charity.

And inasmuch as devotion consists in a certain degree of excellent charity, it not only renders us prompt, active, diligent in keeping all the commandments of God, but beside this, it provokes us to do promptly and heartily as many good works as we can, though they be in no wise commanded but only counselled or inspired. For as a man who is lately cured of some illness walks as much as is needful for him, but slowly and heavily, so also the sinner, being cured of his wickedness, walks as much as God bids him, but heavily and slowly, until he has attained to devotion; then, like a man in good health, he not only walks, but runs and leaps in the way of the commandments of

God, and moreover passes on and runs in the pathway of heavenly counsels and inspirations. Indeed charity and devotion are not more different one from the other than the flame is from the fire, inasmuch as charity, being a spiritual fire, when burning fiercely, is called devotion. So that devotion adds nothing to the fire of charity but the flame which makes charity prompt, active, and diligent, not only in the observance of the commandments of God, but in the exercise of heavenly counsel and inspiration.

## CHAPTER II

### *The Nature and Excellence of Devotion.*

THOSE who discouraged the Israelites<sup>1</sup> from entering the land of promise said that it was a land which ate up the inhabitants ; that is to say, that the air was so bad that it was not possible to live there long, and that the inhabitants were men of such great stature that they ate up the other men like locusts. So the world, my dear Philothea, defames holy devotion as much as it can, picturing devout persons with a vexatious, sad, and grievous countenance, and saying that devotion produces tempers which are melancholy and unbearable. But as Joshua and Caleb<sup>2</sup> not only declared that the promised land was

<sup>1</sup> Num. xiii. 32, "Alii vero, qui fuerunt cum eo, dicebant : Nequaquam ad hunc populum valemus ascendere, quia fortior nobis est." 33. "Terra quam lustravimus devorat habitores suos: populus, quem aspeximus proceræ staturæ est." 34. "Ibi vidimus monstra . . . quibus comparati, quasi locustæ videbamus."

<sup>2</sup> Num. xiv. 6, "At vero Josue filius Nun, et Caleb filius Zephone . . . locuti sunt: Terra quam circumivimus valde bona est."

good and beautiful, but that it would be sweet and pleasant, so the Holy Spirit, by the mouth of all the Saints, and our Lord by His own mouth,<sup>1</sup> assures us that the devout life is a life which is sweet, happy, and delightful.

The world sees that devout people fast, pray, and suffer injury, tend the sick, give to the poor, keep vigil, restrain their temper, smother and stifle their passions, deprive themselves of sensual pleasure, and in fact perform such actions and others of a like kind, which in themselves, and in their own essence and quality, are harsh and rigorous. But the world does not see the inward and hearty devotion which makes all these actions pleasant, sweet, and easy. Look at the bees on the thyme! They find very bitter juice in it,<sup>2</sup> but working it they turn it into honey, for it is their nature to do this. Thou worldling! devout souls find much bitterness in their exercises of mortification, but in doing them they convert them into sweetness and comfort. The fire, the flame, the wheel, the sword, seem flowers and perfume to the martyrs, because they are devout. If devotion can give sweetness to the material torments, even to death itself, what will it do for the actions of virtue? Sugar sweetens unripe fruit, and corrects the rawness and strength of that which is ripe. Now devotion is the true spiritual sugar, which removes bitterness from mortification and trouble from consolation; it takes away grief from the poor, worry from the rich, desolation from the oppressed, insolence from the favoured, sadness from the lonely, dissoluteness from those in Society. It serves as a fire in

<sup>1</sup> St Luke xviii. 1, "Dicebat autem et parabolam ad illos, quoniam oportet semper orare et non deficere."

<sup>2</sup> "Hot and dry in the thirde degree" (Gerarde, p. 459).

winter and as dew in summer. It knows how to abound, and how to suffer poverty,<sup>1</sup> it renders honour and dishonour equally useful, it accepts pleasure and grief with a heart nearly always the same, and fills us with a marvellous comfort.

Consider Jacob's ladder,<sup>2</sup> for it is a true picture of the devout life! The two sides between which we mount, and to which the steps are fixed, represent Prayer, which obtains the love of God, and the Sacraments, which confer it. The steps are nothing else than the different degrees of charity, by which we go from virtue to virtue, either descending by our actions to the help and support of our neighbours, or ascending by contemplation to a loving union with God. Now look, I pray you, at those who are on the ladder! They are men who have angelic hearts, or angels who have human bodies. They are not young, but they seem so, because they are full of vigour and spiritual activity. They have wings to fly with, and they dart Godwards by holy prayer; but they have feet to walk amongst men in holy and pleasant conversation. Their faces are beautiful and cheerful, because they receive all things with sweetness and comfort; their legs, their arms, and their heads are all bare, because their thoughts, their affections, their actions have no design or motive but to be pleasing to God. The rest of their body is covered, but with a light and beautiful robe, because though they use this world and the things of this world, yet they use it in a manner altogether simple and sincere, only taking lightly that which they require for their position.

<sup>1</sup> Phil. iv. 12, "Scio et abundare et penuriam pati."

<sup>2</sup> Gen. xxviii. 12, "Viditque in somnis scalam stantem super terram, et cacumen illius tangens cælum: Angelos quoque Dei ascendentes et descendentes per eam."

# THE PRACTICE OF DEVOTION 25

Such are the devout! Believe me, dear Philothea, devotion is the sweetest of all sweets, and the queen of virtues. It is the perfection of charity. If charity is milk, devotion is its cream; if a plant, devotion is its flower; if a precious stone, devotion is its brilliancy; if precious balm, devotion is its fragrance, the fragrance of comfort which comforts men and rejoices the angels.

## CHAPTER III

*That Devotion is fitting for all Kinds of Vocations and Professions.*

GOD at the Creation commanded the plants to yield their fruits, each one after its kind;<sup>1</sup> so does He command Christians, who are the living plants of His Church,<sup>2</sup> to produce the fruit of devotion, each one according to his condition and vocation. Devotion ought to be differently practised by the gentleman, the workman, the servant, the Prince, the widow, the daughter, the wife. And not only this, but it is necessary to adapt the practice of devotion to the powers, the business, the duties of each person. I ask you, Philothea, would it be fitting for a Bishop to be solitary as the Carthusians<sup>3</sup>? And if the married were

<sup>1</sup> Gen. i. 12, "Et protulit terra herbam viventem, et facientem semen, et lignum pomiferum faciens fructum juxta genus suum."

<sup>2</sup> St Mt. xv. 13, "Omnis plantatio quam non plantavit Pater meus cælestis, eradicabitur."

<sup>3</sup> The Carthusian Order was founded by Bruno of Cologne in the wilderness of the Chartreuse, near Grenoble, in 1084. He had been master of the Cathedral School at Rheims, at a time when the worldliness of the clergy led to the saying: "Bonus esset Remensis archiepiscopus, si non missas inde

never desirous of laying by more than the Capuchins,<sup>1</sup> if the workman were at church every day like the religious, and if the religious were always exposed to every kind of interruption in the service of their neighbour like the Bishop, would not such devotion be ridiculous, disorganised, and unbearable? And yet this fault very often happens, and the world, which does not distinguish or will not distinguish between the devotion and the indiscretion of those who think themselves devout, murmurs and blames a devotion which cannot help these disorders.

No, Philothea, devotion spoils nothing when it is true, but perfects all things. And when it is inconsistent with the lawful calling of any one, it is without doubt false. The bee,<sup>2</sup> says Aristotle, draws its honey from the flowers, without hurting them, leaving them whole and fresh as it has found them. But true devotion does even better, for not only does it not spoil any sort of calling or business, but on the contrary adorns and beautifies them. Jewels of all kinds when thrown into honey become more brilliant thereby,<sup>3</sup> each according to its colour; and each one becomes more acceptable in his vocation when he unites it with devotion. Family cares become peaceful, married love

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cantari oporteret." As a protest against this worldly spirit, he with twelve others retired to the Chartreuse and led in its solitudes a strictly ascetic life (Neander, *Gesch. d. Chr. Rel.*, v. i. p. 351).

<sup>1</sup> The Capuchins were an offshoot of the Observant Franciscans. The Order was founded by Matteo di Basio, a Minorite, under authority of Pope Clement VII. It was a revival of the rigid discipline of the old Franciscan rule (*Ann. Eccles. Od. Raynaldo. ann. 1525*).

<sup>2</sup> "Et lingua susceptum genus id saporis deportant (apes) sine ullo fructuum detrimento" (*Arist. Hist. Animal.*, v. 32).

<sup>3</sup> "Omnes gemmæ mellis decoctu nitescunt" (*Plin. Hist. Nat.*, xxxvii. 74).

# THE PRACTICE OF DEVOTION 27

more sincere, princely service more faithful, and employment of all kinds sweeter and more delightful.

It is an error, if not a heresy, to wish to banish the devout life from the troop of soldiers, from the workman's shop, from the prince's court, from the household of those who are married. It is true, Philothea, that devotion of a purely contemplative, monastic, and religious character cannot be practised in these vocations. But besides these three kinds of devotion there are several others suitable for perfecting those who live a secular life. Abraham,<sup>1</sup> Isaac,<sup>2</sup> and Jacob,<sup>3</sup> David,<sup>4</sup> Job,<sup>5</sup> Tobias,<sup>6</sup> Sara,<sup>7</sup> Rebecca,<sup>8</sup> and Judith<sup>9</sup> afford evidence of it under the old Covenant, and as to the new, St Joseph,<sup>10</sup> Lydia,<sup>11</sup> and St Crispin<sup>12</sup> were perfectly devout in their workshops; St Anne,<sup>13</sup> St

<sup>1</sup> Jas. ii. 23, "amicus Dei."

<sup>2</sup> Gen. xxiv. 63, "Et egressus fuerat ad meditandum."

<sup>3</sup> Gen. xxxii. 30, "Vidi Deum facie ad faciem."

<sup>4</sup> 1 Kings (1 Sam.) xiii. 14, "Quæsiuit Dominus sibi virum juxta cor suum."

<sup>5</sup> Job i. 8, "Job . . . homo simplex et rectus ac timens Deum."

<sup>6</sup> Tobit viii. 4, "Tobias dixit . . . Sara, exurge et deprecemur Deum."

<sup>7</sup> Gen. xxi. 6, "Dixitque Sara: risum fecit mihi Deus."

<sup>8</sup> Gen. xxv. 22, "Pervenitque ut consuleret Dominum."

<sup>9</sup> Judith viii. 8, "Erat hæc in omnibus famosissima, quoniam timebat Dominum valde."

<sup>10</sup> St Mt. i. 19, "justus."

<sup>11</sup> Acts xvi. 14, "Lydia purpuraria . . . colens Deum."

<sup>12</sup> "At swesyon the feest saynt crispin & saynt Crispinian that in the persecucion of the emperour Dioclecian after many cruell turmentes were slayne by y<sup>e</sup> swerde" (Martyrologe, Oct. 25, ann. 302; cf. Baron. Annal.).

<sup>13</sup> Mother of the Blessed Virgin, July 26 (Baron. Annal., vol. i., App. xli.; Hippolytus apud Niceph., ii. 3).

Martha,<sup>1</sup> St Monica,<sup>2</sup> Aquila and Priscilla<sup>3</sup> in their households; Cornelius,<sup>4</sup> St Sebastian,<sup>5</sup> St Maurice,<sup>6</sup> in their camps; Constantine,<sup>7</sup> Helen,<sup>8</sup> St Louis,<sup>9</sup> the blessed Amedeo,<sup>10</sup> St Edward,<sup>11</sup> on their holy thrones.<sup>12</sup> It has even happened that many have lost perfection in

<sup>1</sup> St J. xi. 20, "Martha ut audivit quia Jesus venit, occurrit illi."

<sup>2</sup> Mother of St Augustine of Hippo.—"Viduæ castæ ac sobriæ—bis in die, mane et vespere ad ecclesiam tuam sine ulla intermissione venientis, non ad vanas fabulas et aniles loquacitates, sed ut audiret in tuis sermonibus, et tu illam in suis orationibus" (St Aug. Conf. v. 17).

<sup>3</sup> 1 Cor. xvi. 19, "Salutant vos in Domino multum, Aq: et Pr: cum domestica sua Ecclesia."

<sup>4</sup> Acts x. 1, 2, "Centurio cohortis quæ dicitur Italica, religiosus ac timens Deum."

<sup>5</sup> Sebastianus ex patre Narbonensi, matre Mediolanensi natus, ob generis nobilitatem et virtutem Diocletiano carus fuit: dux primæ cohortis, Christianos, quorum fidem clam colebat, opere et facultatibus adjuvabat. "He was transfixed with arrows, and afterwards beaten to death with rods, on the slopes of the Palatine" (Brev. Rom., Jan. 20; Meyer's Rom., p. 359).

<sup>6</sup> St Maurice, leader of the Theban legion. Martyred with his companions for refusing to sacrifice at the command of Maximian in the territory of the Seduni, the upper valley of the Rhone above St Maurice (Brev. Rom., Sept. 22).

<sup>7</sup> Constantine the Great, died 337.

<sup>8</sup> Helena, wife of Constantius Chlorus, and mother of Constantine the Great: entitled empress on coins (M<sup>c</sup>Giffert's Eusebius, p. 530).

<sup>9</sup> Louis IX., King of France, died 1270.

<sup>10</sup> Amedeo, third Duke of Savoy, died 1471. He was noted among other things for his charity to the poor, whom he called his hunting dogs: "Isti, vir amice, canes sunt, quibus in vita hac, cujus brevis incertaque periodus est, cælum ego venor." Letters 273, 275, 284, refer to appeal made by St Francis to Pope Paul V. for his canonisation (Annal. Eccl. Raynald, ann. 1471).

<sup>11</sup> Edward the Confessor, died 1066.

<sup>12</sup> Migne, "en leurs trônes royaux et ducaux."

the solitude which is so desirable for perfection, and have preserved it amid the multitude which seems so little favourable to perfection. Lot, says St Gregory,<sup>1</sup> who was so chaste in the city, wallowed in the solitude.<sup>2</sup> Wherever we are, we are able and ought to aspire to the perfect life.

## CHAPTER IV

*Of the Need of a Director at the Beginning and in the Pursuit of Devotion.*

THE young Tobias, when bidden to go to Ragez, said: "I know nothing of the way."<sup>3</sup> "Go, then," replied his father, "and find some one to direct thee." I say the same to you, dear Philothea. Do you wish in good earnest to set out on the way of devotion? Seek out some good man who will guide and direct you. This is the counsel of counsels. "Whatever you look for, said the devout Avila,<sup>4</sup> you will never find the will of God so certainly as by the way of that lowly obedience which is so much commended and practised by all the devout men of old."

<sup>1</sup> 2 Pet. ii. 8, "justum Lot oppressum."

<sup>2</sup> Gen. xix. 30, "Lot mansit in monte." 36, "Conceperant ergo duæ filiæ Lot de patre suo."

<sup>3</sup> Tobit v. 2, "Sed neque viam, per quam pergatur illuc, aliquando cognovi." 4, "Perge nunc et inquire tibi aliquem fidelem virum qui eat tecum."

<sup>4</sup> Jean de Avila, the Apostle of Andalusia. Born at Almodovar del Campo in New Castile in 1500, died 1569, studied under the Dominican Soto. His chief works are the "Audi Filia," a commentary on Ps. xlv., published at Alcala in 1579, and his "Spiritual Letters." The former exists in an English translation, 1620; the latter also in English, though published at Rouen in 1631.

The blessed Mother Teresa,<sup>1</sup> seeing that Mme. Catharine of Cordova<sup>2</sup> practised great mortification, had a great desire to imitate her in this, against the advice of her Confessor, who forbade it, and whom in this case she was tempted to disobey. And God said to her: "My daughter, thou keepest a good and safe road. Seest thou the mortification which she practises? I, however, set a greater value on thine obedience." She also loved this virtue so much that in addition to the obedience which she owed to her superiors, she made a special vow to an excellent man,<sup>3</sup> obliging herself to follow his direction and guidance, by which she was infinitely consoled. In like manner, both before and after her, many good souls, the better to subject themselves to God, have submitted their wills to that of His servants, a practice which St Catharine of Sienna<sup>4</sup> praises highly

<sup>1</sup> St Teresa was born at Avila in Old Castile in 1515. She was the reformer of the Carmelite Order. She died in 1582, and was canonised in 1622. She wrote many works, among which were her autobiography, "The Way of Perfection," "The Book of the Foundations," and "The Interior Castle." "The Way of Perfection" is referred to in a letter dated 1604 to the Abbess of Puy d'Orbe [Let. x.], and in one dated 1605, to Madame de Chantal [Let. xci.].

<sup>2</sup> Mme. Catharine of Cardona (not Cordova) was a woman of wonderful piety and austerity. "Mihi dubitanti de cælo responsum est: Nequaquam, filia; bonum tu securumque iter tenes. Viden omnem austeritatem quam ipsa consecatur? equidem pluris tuam facio obedientiam" (Ribera, Vit. S. Ter., part iv. chap. x.).

<sup>3</sup> St Teresa had made a vow of particular obedience to Fr. Gratian, of the Carmelite Order, to do all her life what he commanded, provided it was not contrary to the will of God and to the obedience due to the ordinary superiors of the Church and of her Order [Let. lxvii., Migne, vol. v. 454].

<sup>4</sup> St Catharine of Sienna died at Rome the first Sunday in May, 1380, at the age of 33 (Cronica Sanese). Her

in her dialogues. The devout Princess, St Elizabeth,<sup>1</sup> submitted herself with the utmost obedience to Doctor Master Conrad. Here is also one of the counsels of the great St Louis<sup>2</sup> to his son before his death: "Confess thyself frequently, choose a suitable confessor, a skilful man, who will be able to instruct thee safely in doing those things which will be needful for thee." "A faithful friend," says Holy Writ, "is a strong defence; and he that hath found such an one hath found a treasure."<sup>3</sup> "A faithful friend is the medicine of life, and of immortality; and they

influence was great during the last years of her life. In 1375 she begged Pope Gregory XI. to appoint Cardinals distinguished for their holiness of life; in 1376 the magistrates of Florence sent her to Avignon, to Gregory XI., on a mission of peace; in the following year she was commissioned by Gregory himself to go to Florence on behalf of the peace of the Church. The feeling was so strong that she barely escaped with her life (Raynaldus, Ann. Eccl.). She did much to bring back the Popes from Avignon; cf. Creighton, Papacy, vol. i. pp. 50, 71. She was canonised by Pius II. (Vita P. II., per J. H. Campanum; Mur. R. S. Ital. iii., part ii. 982).

<sup>1</sup> St Elizabeth was the daughter of Andrew II., King of Hungary, and wife of Ludwig IV., Landgrave of Thuringia. She died 1231 at the age of 24. The Elizabethen Kirche at Marburg was built over her tomb. In 1225 her charity was so great that she gave her jewels for the relief of the poor. Shortly before her death, she visited Master Conrad, a priest of Marburg, who was ill. He asked her how she would order her life after his death. She then told him that she had in a vision been told of her own death. She died before Conrad, in 1231 (Rayn. Annal., Eccl.).

<sup>2</sup> "Item moneo te frequenter confiteri: et quod discretos et honestos tibi eligas confessores, qui te sciant docere, a quibus tibi sit cavendum, et quæ te facere sit necesse" (Raynaldus Annales, 1270).

<sup>3</sup> Ecclus vi. 14, "Amicus fidelis protectio fortis; qui autem invenit illum invenit thesaurum."

that fear the Lord shall find Him.”<sup>1</sup> These divine words point chiefly, as you see, to immortality, for which we must above all things have this faithful friend to guide our actions by his advice and counsels and to protect us by this means from the snares and the wiles of the evil one. He will be to us a treasure of wisdom in our afflictions, our sadness, our falls. He will be to us a medicine to ease and to console our hearts in spiritual sickness. He will guard us from evil, and will make what is good in us better, and, when any sickness comes upon us, he will prevent it from being fatal, for he will raise us up from it.

But who will find this friend? The wise man answers, “Those who fear God”: that is, the humble who have a strong desire for their spiritual progress. Since it is of so great importance to you, Philothea, to travel with a good guide in this holy voyage of devotion, pray God with great earnestness that He will furnish you with one who will be after His own heart. And do not doubt that He who could send an angel from heaven, as He did to the young Tobias, will give you one who is good and faithful.

He ought indeed to be always an angel to you. That is to say, when you have found him, do not regard him as a mere man, and do not confide in him as such, nor in his human knowledge, but in God, who will befriend you and will speak by means of this man, putting into his heart and his mouth that which is needful for your welfare; so that you ought to listen to him as an angel who has come down from heaven to lead you heavenwards. Deal with him with an open heart in all sincerity and faithfulness, showing

<sup>1</sup> Eccles. vi. 16, “*Amicus fidelis medicamentum vitæ et immortalitatis: et qui metuunt Dominum invenient illum.*” The A.V. omits the ref. to immortality.

him plainly what is good in you, and what is evil, without feint or dissimulation. By this means that which is good in you will be tried and better secured, and that which is evil will be corrected and cured. You will be relieved and strengthened in your troubles, restrained and disciplined in your consolations. Place absolute confidence in him, mingled with a holy reverence, so that reverence do not lessen confidence, nor confidence hinder reverence. Confide in him with the respect of a daughter towards her father, respect him with the confidence of a son towards his mother. In short, this friendship ought to be strong and sweet, altogether holy, altogether sacred, altogether divine, and altogether spiritual.

And for that, choose one among a thousand, says Avila; I would say, among ten thousand, for there are few indeed of whom we can say that they are fitting for their office. He must be full of charity, of knowledge, of prudence.<sup>1</sup> If one of these is lacking, there is danger. But I say to you again, ask him of God, and having found him, bless His Divine Majesty, remain firm, and do not look for others, but go simply, humbly, trustfully, and you will have a very happy voyage.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. St Teresa, *Life*, p. 70; *Vida* xiii. 24, 26, 30. Prudence, experience, and learning are the three qualities which she considered necessary in a spiritual guide, especially learning: "Every Christian should continue to be guided by a learned director if he can, and the more learned the better." Cf. *Eng. Pr. Bk* : "Come to me or to some other discreet and learned minister of God's word."

## CHAPTER V

*That a beginning must be made by the purgation of the soul.*

“THE flowers,” says the Holy Bridegroom, “appear on the earth, and the time of pruning and cutting is come.”<sup>1</sup> What are the flowers of our hearts, O Philothea, but good desires? And as soon as they appear, we must put our hands to the pruning-knife to cut off from our conscience all dead and superfluous works. The foreign maiden before marrying an Israelite had to “put off the raiment of her captivity,” pare her nails, and trim her hair.<sup>2</sup> And the soul which aspires to the honour of being the Bride of the Son of God must “put off the old man and put on the new”;<sup>3</sup> and must pare and trim the hindrances of all kinds which divest her of the love of God. It is the beginning of our salvation to be purged from our sinful tempers. St Paul in a moment was purged by a perfect purgation:<sup>4</sup> so also was St Catharine of Genoa,<sup>5</sup> St Mary Magda-

<sup>1</sup> Cant. ii. 12, “Flores apparuerunt in terra nostra, tempus putationis advenit.” The Vulg. follows the LXX. against the Hebrew, “the singing of birds.”

<sup>2</sup> Deut. xxi. 11-13, “Et videris in numero captivorum mulierem pulchram et adamaveris eam voluerisque habere uxorem, introduces eam in domum tuam: quæ radet cæsariem, et circumcidet ungues, et deponet vestem in qua capta est.”

<sup>3</sup> Col. iii. 9. 10, “Nolite mentiri invicem, expoliantes vos veterem hominem cum actibus suis, et induentes novum.”

<sup>4</sup> Acts ix. 5, 6, “Qui dixit: Quis es Domine? Et ille: Ego sum Jesus, quem tu persequeris; durum est tibi contra stimulum calcitrare. Et tremens ac stupens dixit; Domine, quid me vis facere?”

<sup>5</sup> St Catharine of Genoa, 1447-1510, September 14. “Fructum laborum suorum illico perspexerunt e primis

lene,<sup>1</sup> St Pelagia,<sup>2</sup> and some others, but this kind of purgation is quite as miraculous and extraordinary in the order of grace as the resurrection is in the order of nature, so that we ought not to expect it. The ordinary purgation and healing, whether of the body or the soul, is only accomplished little by little, by progress from improvement to improvement, with trouble and at leisure.

The Angels on Jacob's ladder have wings; yet they do not fly, but ascend and descend in order, from step to step.<sup>3</sup> The road which ascends from sin to devotion is like the dawn,<sup>4</sup> which when it rises does not drive away the darkness in a moment, but little by little.<sup>5</sup> The cure, says the aphorism, which is made slowly, is always the most sure; the diseases of the heart, like those of the body, come on horseback and post haste, but they return on foot and at a slow pace. There is need, then, to be courageous and patient,

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speciminibus, quibus a tenera ætate futuræ sanctitati suæ prælusit Catharina" (Vita anon).

<sup>1</sup> St Lk. viii. 2, "Maria, quæ vocatur Magdalene, de qua septem demonia exierant."

<sup>2</sup> St Pelagia: a penitent converted by the Bishop of Edessa. "The feest also of saynt Margarete a virgyn that was of so notable beauty that her friends wold suffer no man but by synguler favour to look upon her. And she after was called broder Pellagy, for the same night that she by compulsyon of her frendes was maryed, she stale away in a mannes clothynge and was a monke of so high perfeccyon that his abbot dyd commytt unto his governaunce a ministry of virgyns" (Martyr. Wynkin de Worde).

<sup>3</sup> Gen. xxviii. 12, "Viditque in somnis scalam stantem super terram . . . Angelos quoque Dei ascendentes et descendentes per eam."

<sup>4</sup> Cant. vi. 9, "Quæ est ista quæ progreditur quasi aurora consurgens."

<sup>5</sup> Prov. iv. 18, "Justorum autem semita quasi lux splendens, procedit et crescit ad perfectam diem."

Philothea, in this undertaking. Alas! how sad it is to see souls, when they find that they are subject to many imperfections after having practised devotion for some time, begin to be anxious and disconcerted and discouraged, almost allowing their heart to be carried away with the temptation of giving up everything and going back on the old way. But, on the other hand, is it not extremely dangerous for souls, which by a contrary temptation believe themselves purged from their imperfections, the very first day of purgation to consider themselves perfect before they have become so, and to start flying without wings? O Philothea, how great is their danger of falling because they are taken away too soon from the hands of the physician! Ah! "Do not rise before the light has come," says the Prophet. "Rise after you have sat down";<sup>1</sup> and practising the lesson himself, and having been already washed and cleansed, he asks to be washed and cleansed again.<sup>2</sup>

The practice of the purgation of the soul can end, and ought only to end, with our life. Let us not be at all disconcerted by our imperfections, for our perfection consists in fighting them, and we should not know how to fight them without seeing them, or how to conquer them without meeting them. Our victory does not lie in our not feeling them, but in our not consenting to them.

But it is not in consenting to them only that we are hard put to it; it is sometimes necessary for the exercise of our humility that we should be wounded in this spiritual conflict. Yet we are never conquered

<sup>1</sup> Ps. cxxvi. 2, "Vanum est vobis ante lucem surgere: surgite postquam sederitis." (A.V. Ps. cxxvii.)

<sup>2</sup> Ps. iv. 4, "Amplius lava me ab iniquitate mea: et a peccato meo munda me." (A.V. Ps. v.)

unless we have lost life or courage. Now, imperfections and venial sins<sup>1</sup> would not be able to take away the spiritual life, for it is only lost by mortal sin.

It remains, then, that they should not make us lose courage: "Deliver me, O Lord," said David, "from cowardice and discouragement";<sup>2</sup> it is a happy condition for us in this war, that we are always conquerors, provided that we are willing to fight.

## CHAPTER VI

*Of the First Purgation, which is that of Mortal Sins.*

THE first purgation which it is necessary to make is that of sin; the means of doing it, the Holy Sacrament of penance.<sup>3</sup> Search out the most worthy confessor you can find, take in hand one of the little books which have been written to aid the con-

<sup>1</sup> Peccatum omne, aut mortale, sive contra ordinem caritatis est, aut veniale est, et præter illum ordinem, et ex se dignum venia (St Thomas Aq. Summa II. i. lxxxviii.). Cf. English Litany, as recognising the distinction: "from fornication and all other deadly sin."

<sup>2</sup> Ps. liv. 9, "Expectabam eum qui salvum me fecit a pusillanimitate et tempestate." (A.V. Ps. lv.)

<sup>3</sup> "At enim baptismus sacramentum est, quia peccata omnia, ac præsertim quod origine contractum fuit, delet; eadem ratione pænitentia, quæ peccata omnia post baptismum voluntate vel actione suscepta tollit, vere et proprie sacramentum dicendum est" (Cat. Trid. pt. ii. cap. v. 11). "The sacrament of penance is properly the absolution pronounced by the priest upon such as be penitent for their sins, and do knowledge and show themselves to be" (The King's Book, 1543).

"Let him come . . . and open his grief, that by the ministry of God's holy Word, he may receive the benefit of absolution" (Engl. Prayer Bk.).

science in making a good confession, as Granada,<sup>1</sup> Bruno,<sup>2</sup> Arias,<sup>3</sup> Anger.<sup>4</sup> Read them well, and note point by point in what you have offended God from the time when you first had the use of reason to the present hour. And if you mistrust your memory, put down in writing what you have noted. Having thus prepared and gathered together the sinful dispositions of your conscience, detest<sup>5</sup> them and cast them off with a contrition and displeasure as great as your heart can endure, considering these four things: that by sin you have lost the peace of God, forsaken your share in Paradise, accepted the eternal torment of Hell, and renounced the eternal love of God. You see, Philothea, that I am speaking of a general confession<sup>6</sup> of the whole life, which indeed I confess is not always absolutely necessary, but which will be exceedingly useful to you at the beginning. It is for this reason that I strongly advise it. It often happens that the ordinary confessions of those who live a common and trivial life are full of great defects. For we often do not prepare at all, or very little; or we have not the requisite contrition. Indeed it frequently happens that we go to confession with a tacit desire to return to sin, the more

<sup>1</sup> Luis de Granada, Dominican, died 1568. His "*Guida de Pecadores*" was published at Salamanca in 1570. It is referred to as the "*Vrai chemin*" (Let. 73).

<sup>2</sup> Bruno, a Jesuit. In letters 73, 74, his method of meditation is recommended.

<sup>3</sup> François Arias. His works are recommended in letter 75, especially "*The Imitation of our Lady*."

<sup>4</sup> Anger, Edmund, died 1571. He was confessor to Henry III. of France, and author of the *Catéchisme Français*.

<sup>5</sup> "*Contritio est animi dolor, ac detestatio de peccato commissio cum proposito non peccandi de cetero.*"

<sup>6</sup> The advantages of making a general confession are given in the *Spiritual Exercises* of St Ignatius Loyola. The method is found below (pt. i. ch. xix.).

so that we do not wish to avoid the occasions of sin, nor take the necessary measures for amendment of life. In all such cases the general confession is requisite to secure the soul. But besides this, a general confession calls us to a knowledge of ourselves, provokes us to a healthy perplexity as to our past life, makes us wonder at the mercy of God, who has awaited us in patience. It calms our hearts, refreshes our spirits, stirs up in us good designs, affords opportunities to our spiritual Father to give us advice most suitable to our condition, and opens our hearts that we may rightly express ourselves in the confessions which follow.

Speaking, therefore, of a general renewal of our heart, and of a complete conversion of our soul to God, by the undertaking of the devout life, I have good reason, it seems, Philothea, to counsel you to make this general confession.

## CHAPTER VII

*Of the Second Purgation, which is that of the Affections of Sin.*

ALL the Israelites went out in effect from the land of Egypt,<sup>1</sup> but they did not all depart from their affection for it. This is why in the desert several of them regretted that they had not the onions and the flesh-pots of Egypt.<sup>2</sup> So also there are penitents who depart in effect from sin, and yet do not leave the affection for it. They resolve to sin no more, but it is

<sup>1</sup> Exod. xii. 41, "Quibus expletis, eadem die egressus est omnis exercitus Domini de terra Ægypti."

<sup>2</sup> Num. xi. 4, 5, "Quis dabit nobis ad vescendum carnes? Recordamur piscium quos comedebamus in Ægypto gratis: in mentem nobis veniunt cucumeres, et pepones, porrique et cepae et allia."

with a certain aversion that they debar themselves and abstain from the unhappy pleasure of sin. Their heart renounces sin, and withdraws from it; but it does not for all that give it up, returning frequently in that direction, as Lot's wife did toward Sodom.<sup>1</sup> They abstain from sin, as sick people do from melons, for they do not eat them, because the physician threatens them with death if they do; but they worry about abstaining from them, they speak of them, and are in suspense as to whether they should eat them. They wish at least to think of them, and think those happy who can eat them. Thus do these weak and cowardly penitents abstain for a while from sin, but it is with regret. They would like to be able to sin without being damned. They speak of sin with feeling and relish, and think those happy who do it. A man determined to avenge himself will change his mind in confession, but soon afterwards he will be found amongst friends who take pleasure in speaking of his quarrel, saying: "Had it not been for the fear of God, he would have done this or that! How difficult the divine law and this point of forgiveness is! Would to God that he might be able to avenge himself!" Ah! who cannot see that although this poor man may be out of sin, yet he is altogether harassed with the affection of sin; and though out of Egypt in effect, he is still there in appetite, desiring the leeks and onions which he was accustomed to eat there. He is like a woman who, though detesting her evil passions, yet has pleasure in being courted and flattered. Alas! in what great peril are such people!

O Philothea, since you wish to undertake the devout life, you must not only forsake sin, but wholly

<sup>1</sup> Gen. xix. 26, "*Respiciensque uxor ejus post se, versa est in statuam salis.*"

cleanse your heart from all the affections which result from sin. For besides the danger there is of falling back, these wretched affections enfeeble your spirit, and so far weight it down that it is not able to do good works promptly, diligently, and frequently, in which, nevertheless, lies the true source of devotion. Souls which, when relieved from the state of sin, have still its affections and its feebleness, are in my opinion like girls who have a pale complexion, who are not ill themselves, but whose actions are ill. They eat without taste, they sleep without rest, and they drag themselves rather than walk. In the same way these souls do what is good with so much spiritual weariness, that they take away all grace from their good practices, which are few in number and small in effect.

## CHAPTER VIII

*Of the Means of practising this Second Purgation.*

NOW the first means of attaining this second purgation is a lively and strong apprehension of the great evil which sin brings us, by means of which we enter upon a deep and earnest contrition. For as contrition (if it be true), let it be ever so slight, more especially when joined to the virtue of the Sacraments, purges us sufficiently from sin, so when it is great and earnest, it purges us from all the affections which depend on sin. A feeble and weak hatred or spite makes us hold in aversion the person whom we hate and forces us to avoid his company. But if it is a deadly and violent hatred, not only do we flee and abhor the person against whom we bear it, but we dislike and cannot endure either the company of his associates, relations, and friends, or his likeness, or even anything which

belongs to him. Thus when the penitent hates sin only with a slight, though it may be a true contrition, he resolves indeed that he will sin no more ; but when he hates it with a mighty and vigorous contrition, he not only detests sin, but also all the affections, associations, and ways of sin. We must then, Philothea, enlarge our contrition and repentance as much as we can, that it may extend even to the least things that belong to sin.<sup>1</sup> Thus Magdalene in her conversion lost so much the taste of the sins and the pleasure which she had entertained that she never more thought of them.<sup>2</sup> And David declared that he not only hated sin, but even all the ways and paths of sin.<sup>3</sup> In this consists the renewal of youth in the soul, which the same Prophet likens to the renewing of the eagle.<sup>4</sup>

Now to attain to this apprehension and contrition, you must exercise yourself carefully in the following meditations ; if they are practised well, they will root out of your heart (by means of the grace of God) sin and the principal affections of sin. I have drawn them up altogether to this end. You will use them one after another,<sup>5</sup> as I have marked them, taking only one of them each day, in the morning, if possible, the time most suitable for all the work of the spirit ; and you

<sup>1</sup> Sic praeterea non solum maxima, sed vehementissima atque adeo perfecta omnemque ignaviam socordiam excludat (Brev. Rom. St Mary Magd. Lect. ix. St Aug.).

<sup>2</sup> Accessit autem ad Dominum immunda, ut rediret munda. Accessit ægra, ut rediret sana. Accessit confessa, ut rediret professa (Brev. Rom. Lect. ix. St Aug.).

<sup>3</sup> Ps. cxviii. 104, "Propterea odivi omnem viam iniquitatis." (A.V. Ps. cxix.)

<sup>4</sup> Ps. cii. 5, "Qui replet in bonis desiderium tuum, renovabitur ut aquilae juvenus tua." (A.V. Ps. ciii.)

<sup>5</sup> The Meditations of St Francis are printed in the "Garden of the Soul" with the instructions on the method of meditation which are given in the Second Part of the "Devout Life."

will meditate on them the rest of the day. If you do not yet like to practise meditation, see what I say about it in the second part.<sup>1 2</sup>

## CHAPTER IX

*Of the Creation.**Meditation I*

## PREPARATION.

Place yourself in the presence of God.  
Ask him to inspire you.

## CONSIDERATIONS.

CONSIDER that it is only so many years ago that you were not in the world, and that your existence was actually nothing. Where were we, O my soul, at that time? The world had already lasted a long while, and yet it had no tidings at all of us.

God has caused you to be brought forth from this nothingness to make you what you are without having need of you, and has done it by His goodness alone.

Consider the existence God has given to you. It is the leading existence of the visible world, capable of living eternally, and of being perfectly united to His Divine Majesty.

## AFFECTIONS AND RESOLUTIONS.

Humble yourself deeply before God, saying in your heart with the Psalmist: "O Lord, I am in Thy

<sup>1</sup>Pt. ii. ch. ii.-ix.

<sup>2</sup>"Hereby we see that amongst the exercises of a godly life, there is none that is wont more to elevate or lift up the mind of man to a higher degree of perfection than devout meditation" (Disce Vivere, Chr. Sutton, ch. i.).

sight even as nothing,<sup>1</sup> and how wast Thou mindful of me to create me.”<sup>2</sup> Alas, my soul, thou wast absorbed in this ancient nothingness, and wouldst be there still if God had not withdrawn thee from it. And what wouldst thou do within this nothingness?

Give thanks to God. O my great and good Creator, how much am I indebted to Thee, since Thou hast taken me in my nothingness to make me by Thy mercy what I am! Whatever shall I do that I may worthily bless Thy holy Name, and give thanks for Thy great goodness?

Be abashed. But also, my Creator, in place of uniting myself to Thee by love and service, I make myself altogether rebellious by my disordered affections, separating and removing myself from Thee to join myself to sin, showing no more honour to Thy goodness than if Thou hadst not been my Creator.

Prostrate yourself before God. O my soul, know that the Lord is thy God, it is He who hath made thee and not thou thyself.<sup>3</sup> O God, I am the work of thy hands.<sup>4</sup>

I wish no longer henceforth to delight in myself, who of myself am nothing. Of what dost thou boast, O dust and ashes? Yea rather, O true nothingness, why dost thou exalt thyself? And to humble myself I will not do such and such things, will bear such and such contempt. I will change my life, and henceforth

<sup>1</sup> Ps. xxxviii. 6, “Substantia mea tanquam nihilum ante te.” (A.V. Ps. xxxix.)

<sup>2</sup> Ps. cxiii. 12, “Dominus memor fuit nostri.” (A.V. Ps. cxv.) Cf. Ps. viii. 5.

<sup>3</sup> Ps. xcix. 3, “Scitote quoniam Dominus ipse est Deus: ipse fecit nos, et non ipsi nos.” (A.V. Ps. c.)

<sup>4</sup> Job xxxiv. 19, “Qui non accipit personas principum: nec cognovit tyrannum cum disceptaret contra pauperem: opus enim manuum ejus sunt universi.”

follow my Creator, and honour myself in the condition of existence which He has given me,<sup>1</sup> employ it entirely in obedience to His will, by the means which will be shown me, and of which I will enquire of my spiritual Father.

## CONCLUSION.

Thank God. Bless thy God, O my soul, and all that is within me praise His holy name.<sup>2</sup> For His goodness hath drawn me out of nothing, and His mercy hath created me.

*Offer.*—O my God, I offer Thee with all my heart the existence which Thou hast given. I dedicate and consecrate it to Thee.

*Prayer.*—O God, strengthen me in these affections and resolutions. O holy Virgin, commend thou them to the mercy of thy Son, with all those for whom I ought to pray, etc. Pater noster.<sup>3</sup> Ave Maria.<sup>4</sup>

At the end of the prayer, whilst you are walking a little, gather a little nosegay of devotion from the considerations you have made. It sweetens the rest of the day.

<sup>1</sup> “To do my duty in that state of life unto which it shall please God to call me” (Church Catechism).

<sup>2</sup> Ps. cii. 1, “Benedic, anima mea, Domino, et omnia quæ intra me sunt nomini sancto ejus.” (A.V. Ps. ciii.)

<sup>3</sup> “The Prayer of our Lord, called the Paternoster.” “All Christian men ought to think and believe that this same prayer is the most excellent, and most sufficient and most perfect of all others.” (The King’s Book, 1543.)

<sup>4</sup> “The Church hath used to adjourn it to the end of the Paternoster, as an hymn or prayer of laud and praise, partly of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, for our redemption, and partly of the Blessed Virgin for her humble consent given and expressed to the angel at this salutation. Laud, praise, and thanks are in this Ave Maria principally given and yielded to our Lord: but therewithal the Virgin lacketh not her laud, praise, and thanks for her excellent and singular virtue.” (The King’s Book, 1543.)

## CHAPTER X

*Of the End for which we were Created.*

*Meditation II*

## PREPARATION.

Place yourself before God.  
Pray Him to inspire you.

## CONSIDERATIONS.

GOD has not placed you in this world for any need that He has of you, since you are of no use at all to Him, but only that He may perform in you His goodness, giving you His grace and His glory. And to this end He has given you an understanding that you may know Him, a memory that you may be mindful of Him, a will that you may love Him, an imagination to bring before yourself His benefits, eyes to see the wonders of His works, a tongue to praise Him, and other faculties in like manner.

Being created and placed in this world with this intention, all actions contrary to it ought to be rejected and avoided, and those which do not in any way serve to this end ought to be despised as vain and superfluous.

Consider the unhappiness of the world, which thinks nothing of this, but lives as if it believed itself created only for the purpose of building houses, planting trees, amassing riches, and playing the fool.

## AFFECTIONS AND RESOLUTIONS.

Be abashed, reproaching your soul with its wretchedness, because it has hitherto been so great that it has thought little or nothing of all this.

Alas! you will say, what am I to think, O my God, when I do not think at all of Thee? Of what am I to remind myself when I forget Thee? What am I to love when I do not love Thee? Alas! I ought to feast on truth, and I stuff myself with vanity, and serve the world which is only made to serve me.

Loathe the life which is past. I renounce you, O vain thoughts and useless imaginings, I forsake you, detestable and frivolous memories, I renounce you, friendships faithless and disloyal, ye services lost, ye favours wretched and thankless, ye vexatious condescensions.

Turn to God. And Thou, O my God, my Saviour, Thou shalt be henceforth the sole object of my thoughts. No, never will I give my mind to thoughts which are displeasing to Thee. My memory shall be full all the days of my life of Thy great goodness which Thou hast so sweetly practised towards me. Thou shalt be the delight of my heart, and the sweetness of my affections.

Ah! therefore will I hold in horror such and such trifles and amusements, to which I used to give myself; such and such vain practices in which I employed my days: such and such affections which engaged my heart; and with this intention I will use such and such remedies.

#### CONCLUSION

Thank God that He has made you for so excellent an end. Thou hast made me, O Lord, for Thyself,<sup>1</sup> that I may enjoy eternally the immensity of Thy glory. When shall I be worthy of it, and when shall I bless Thee as I ought?

<sup>1</sup> "Quia fecisti nos ad te, et inquietum est cor nostrum donec requiescat in te" (St Aug. Conf. i. 1).

*Offer.*—I offer Thee, O my dear Creator, all these my affections and resolutions with all my soul and with all my heart.

*Prayer.*—I beseech Thee, O God, to accept my desires and my vows, and to give Thy holy blessing to my soul, to the end that it may be able to fulfil them by the merits of the blood of Thy Son which was shed upon the Cross, etc.

Make the little nosegay of devotion.

## CHAPTER XI

### *Of the Benefits of God.*

#### *Meditation III*

##### PREPARATION.

Place yourself in the presence of God.  
Pray Him to inspire you.

##### CONSIDERATIONS.

CONSIDER the bodily graces which God has given to you, what a body, what facilities for preserving it, what health, what comforts convenient to it, what friends, what aids! But consider it with reference to the number of other persons who are more worthy than you are, and yet are destitute of these benefits.

Some are wasted in body, in health, in their members, others given over to the mercy of reproach, others of contempt and dishonour; others overwhelmed with poverty; and God has not wished you to be so miserable.

Consider the gifts of the spirit! How many there

are in the world who are stupid, mad, senseless ! And why are you not of the number ? God has favoured you. How many there are who have been brought up rudely and in utter ignorance, and Divine providence has caused you to be brought up with good manners and honourably.

Consider the spiritual graces, Philothea. You are of the children of the Church ; God has instructed you from your youth up in the knowledge of Him. How many times has He given you His Sacrament ? How many times has He given you inspiration, internal light, reproof, for your amendment ? How many times has He pardoned your faults ? How many times have you been delivered from occasions of losing yourself ? And these years past, has there not been leisure and opportunity of advancing yourself for the good of your soul ? Look a little more carefully, how gentle and gracious God has been to you.

## AFFECTIONS AND RESOLUTIONS.

Wonder at the goodness of God.—How good God is to me ! O how good He is ! How rich in mercy, how generous in kindness, O Lord, is Thy heart ! O my soul, let us evermore tell out what graces He has shown to us.

Wonder at your Ingratitude. — What am I, O Lord, that thou hast been mindful of me ? <sup>1</sup> How great is my unworthiness ! Alas ! I have trampled under foot Thy benefits, I have dishonoured Thy gifts, turning them into the abuse and contempt of Thy sovereign goodness ; I have opposed the abyss of my ingratitude to the abyss of Thy grace and favour.

Rouse yourself to thankfulness.—Rise up, O my

<sup>1</sup> Ps. viii. 5, “ Quid est homo, quod memor es ejus ? ”

heart ! Be no longer unfaithful, ungrateful, and disloyal to so great a benefactor. And will not my soul from this day forth be subject to God, who has worked so many wonders and so much grace in me and for me ?

Ah ! then, Philothea, withdraw your body from such and such pleasures, make it subject to the service of God, who has done so much for you. Apply your soul to know Him and acknowledge Him, by such and such practices as are requisite for this. Use carefully the means which are in the Church, to save yourself and to love God ; Yes, I will be regular at Prayer and Sacraments, I will listen to the holy Word, I will practise inspirations and counsels.

#### CONCLUSION.

Thank God for the knowledge that He has now given you of your duty and of all the benefits heretofore received.

Offer Him your heart with all your resolutions. Pray Him to strengthen you that you may faithfully practise them by the merit of the death of His Son ; implore the intercession of the Virgin and the Saints.<sup>1</sup> Pater noster, etc.

Make the little spiritual nosegay.

<sup>1</sup> “*N. B.*—Though we confess actions to God, and to all His Saints, yet the Saints are only inferior Mediators or Intercessors, and the merit of their Intercession is grounded, as our Prayers are, on the Infinite Merits of Jesus Christ, the One Mediator of God and Man, who gave Himself a Redemption for all (1 Tim. ii. 5, 6), through whom alone we hope from God the Forgiveness of our Sins. We only join our Prayers and Supplications to those of the Saints, according to the Belief of the Communion of Saints ; and as they are the peculiar friends of God, we Beg their Interces-

## CHAPTER XII

*Of Sins.**Meditation IV*

## PREPARATION.

Place yourself in the presence of God;  
Ask Him to inspire you.

## CONSIDERATIONS.

THINK how it is that you begin to sin, and look how from the first beginning sins have multiplied themselves in your heart, how you have every day added to them against God, against yourself, against your neighbour, by deed, by word, by desire and thought.<sup>1</sup>

Consider your evil inclinations, and how you have followed them. And on these two points you will see that your faults are more in number than the hairs of your head,<sup>2</sup> yea, even than the sand of the sea.<sup>3</sup>

Consider by itself the sin of ingratitude to God,

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sion that we may thereby more easily obtain the mercy, etc., which we implore from God. "When thou didst pray, etc., said the Angel to Toby, I offered thy prayers to the Lord" (Tob. xii. 12). "The Whole Duty of a Christian,"—*permissu Superiorum*, 1775.

<sup>1</sup> "Alii sunt, qui, vel quod raro peccata sua confiteri solent, vel quod nullam curam et cognitionem in pervestigandis suis sceleribus posuerunt nec commissâ confessione expedire, nec unde ejus officii initium ducendum est, satis sciunt" (Cat. Trident. part ii. chap. v. 60).

<sup>2</sup> Ps. xxxix. 13, "Multiplicatæ sunt super capillos capitis mei" (A.V., Ps. xl.).

<sup>3</sup> Ps. cxxxviii. 18, "Dinumerabo eos, et super arenam multiplicabuntur" (A.V., Ps. cxxxix.).

which is a general sin that diffuses itself through all the others, and renders them infinitely more serious.

Look then how many benefits God has conferred on you, and how you have misused them all against Him who gave you them; particularly how many inspirations have been despised, how many resolutions you have made useless; and more than all, how many times have you received the Sacraments, and yet where are their fruits? What has become of these precious jewels with which your beloved Bridegroom has adorned you?<sup>1</sup> All this has been covered up under your iniquities. With what preparation have you received them? Think too of this ingratitude, how that when God has run so far after you to save you, you have always fled before Him to lose yourself.

#### AFFECTIONS AND RESOLUTIONS.

Confound yourself in your misery. O my God, how dare I appear before Thine eyes? Alas! I am only the offscouring of the world, and a sink of ingratitude and iniquity.<sup>2</sup> Is it possible that I have been so disloyal, that I have not a single one of my senses left, not one of the faculties of my soul, which I have not spoilt, violated, and soiled, and that not a day of my life has passed in which I have not brought forth such evil effects? Is it thus that I ought to return the benefits of my Creator, and the blood of my Redeemer?

<sup>1</sup> Isa. lxi. 10, "Gaudens gaudebo in Domino, et exultabit anima mea in Deo meo: quia induit me vestimentis salutis; et indumento justitiæ circumdedit me, quasi sponsum decoratum corona, et quasi sponsam ornatam monilibus suis."

<sup>2</sup> 1 Cor. iv. 13, "Blasphemamur et obsecramus, tanquam purgamenta hujus mundi facti sumus, omnium perispema usque adhuc."

Ask pardon, and throw yourself at the feet of the Lord as a prodigal,<sup>1</sup> as a Magdalene,<sup>2</sup> as a woman who has soiled her marriage bed with all kinds of adultery. O Lord, have mercy on me, a sinner.<sup>3</sup> Alas! O living spring of compassion, have pity on me in my misery.

Resolve to live better. O Lord, never more by the help of Thy grace, never more will I abandon myself to sin.

Alas! I have loved it only too much, I detest it and embrace Thee. O Father of mercy, I will live and die in Thee.

To blot out my past sins, I will accuse myself boldly of them, and will not leave one of them that I will not drive out.

I will do all that I can to root out their growths from my soul, specially such and such as are the more irksome to me.

And to do this I will steadfastly employ the means which will be recommended to me, since I do not seem ever to have done enough to repair so great faults.

#### CONCLUSION.

Thank God, who has awaited you until this hour, and has given you these good affections.

Make Him an offering of your heart to work them out.

Pray Him to strengthen you, etc.

<sup>1</sup> St Luke xv. 21, "Dixitque ei filius: Pater, peccavi in cælum et coram te, jam non sum dignus vocari filius tuus."

<sup>2</sup> St Luke vii. 37, "Et ecce mulier, quæ erat in civitate, peccatrix."

<sup>3</sup> St Luke xviii. 13, "Deus propitius esto mihi peccatori."

## CHAPTER XIII

*Of Death.**Meditation V*

## PREPARATION.

Place yourself in the presence of God. Ask of Him His grace.

Imagine yourself to be dangerously ill on your deathbed, without any hope of escaping it.

## CONSIDERATIONS.

CONSIDER the uncertainty of the day of your death. O my soul, thou wilt depart one day from this body. When will it be, in winter or in summer? in town or in the country? by day or by night? will it be suddenly or with warning? will it be by sickness or by accident? will you have an opportunity to make your confession or not? will you be attended by your confessor and spiritual father? Alas! of all this we know nothing at all. This only is certain, that we shall die, and always sooner than we think.

Consider that then the world will end so far as you are concerned; there will be nothing more of it for you. It will turn upside down before your eyes! Yes! then the pleasures, the vanities, the worldly joys, the vain affections, will appear to us as phantoms and clouds. Ah! wretched man that I am, for what trifles and chimeras have I offended my God! You will see that you have forsaken God for nothing. On the contrary, devotion and good works will then seem so desirable and so sweet. And why have I not followed this beautiful and gracious way? Then the sins

which seemed but small will appear large as the hills, and your devotion small indeed.

Consider the long and lingering farewells which your soul will say to this world below. It will say farewell to riches, to vanities and vain associations, to pleasures, to pastimes, to friends and neighbours, to relations, to children, to husband, to wife, in short to every creature ; and last of all to the body, which it will leave pale, wan, wasted, hideous, and stinking.

Consider the haste with which this body will be taken away and hidden in the earth ; and that done, the world will think but little more of you, nor will it be mindful of you, no more than you yourself have thought of others. God give him peace, they will say, and then that is all. O death, how inconsiderate<sup>1</sup> thou art, how pitiless !

Consider that at the departure of the body the soul goes on its way, either to the right or to the left.<sup>2</sup> Alas ! where will yours go ? which way will it take ? No other than that which it has begun in this world.

#### AFFECTIONS AND RESOLUTIONS.

Pray God, and throw yourself into His arms. Alas ! Lord, take me under Thy protection on that frightful day. Make that hour happy and propitious to me, and would that all the other hours of my life might be sad and woeful in comparison with it !

Despise the world. Since I know not the hour in which I must leave thee, O world, I do not wish at all to bind myself to thee. My dear friends, my dear

<sup>1</sup> French orig. text, "inconsiderable."

<sup>2</sup> St Matt. xxv. 34, "Tunc dicet rex his qui a dextris ejus erunt ; venite benedicti Patris mei." V. 41, "Tunc dicet et his qui a sinistris erunt ; Discedite a me maledicti."

associations, let me love you only : with a holy friendship which may last eternally ! Why should I unite myself to you in such sort that I shall be obliged to quit and break these bonds ?

I will prepare myself for that hour, and take the care which is requisite to make the passage happily.

I will secure the state of my conscience with all my might, and will set in order such and such failures.

#### CONCLUSION.

Thank God for these resolutions which He has given to you. Offer them to His Majesty. Beseech Him once again that He will render your death happy, by the merit of His Son's Death. Implore the aid of the Virgin and the Saints. Pater, Ave Maria.

Make a nosegay of myrrh.

#### CHAPTER XIV

##### *Of the Judgment.*

##### *Meditation VI*

#### PREPARATION.

Place yourself before God ;  
Ask Him to inspire you.

#### CONSIDERATIONS.

FINALLY, after the time which God has marked out for the duration of this world, and after a number of horrible signs<sup>1</sup> and portents, through which

<sup>1</sup> St Luke xxi. 25 ; St Thom. Sum. part iii. Suppl. Qu. 73, " Multa signa precedent diem judicii." Reference is made in St Thomas to the fifteen signs of St Jerome.

men will wither with fright and fear,<sup>1</sup> the fire will come like a deluge and will burn up and reduce to ashes the whole face of the earth, without anything which we see in it being exempt.<sup>2</sup>

After this deluge of flame and thunder, all men will rise from the earth (except those who have already risen<sup>3</sup>), and at the voice of the Archangel<sup>4</sup> they will appear in the Valley of Jehoshaphat.<sup>5</sup> But alas! with what difference, for some will be there in glorious and shining bodies, others in bodies hideous and horrible.<sup>6</sup>

Consider the Majesty<sup>7</sup> with which the Sovereign Judge will appear, surrounded by all the Angels and Saints, having before Him His Cross more resplendent than the sun, a sign of grace to the good and of severity to the bad.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>1</sup> St Luke xxi. 26, "Arescentibus hominibus præ timore."

<sup>2</sup> 2 St Pet. iii. 10, "Adveniet autem dies Domini ut fur: in quo cæli magno impetu transient, elementa vero calore solventur." Cf. St Thom. Sum. iii. Suppl. Qu. 76.

<sup>3</sup> St Matt. xxvii. 52, "Et multa corpora sanctorum, qui dormierant surrexerunt."

<sup>4</sup> 1 Thess. iv. 15, "Quoniam ipse Dominus in jussu, et in voce Archangeli, et in tuba Dei descendet de cælo: et mortui qui in Christo sunt resurgent primi."

<sup>5</sup> Joel iii. 12, "Consurgant et ascendant gentes in vallem Josaphat."

<sup>6</sup> This was an open question among the Schoolmen: St Thom. Sum. part iii. Suppl. Qu. lxxxvi. Art. i., "Nulli erunt defectus turpitudinis ex imbecillitate naturæ in corporibus damnatorum, nisi defectus, qui ex naturalibus principiis in humano corpore naturaliter consequuntur."

<sup>7</sup> St Matt. xxv. 31, "Cum autem venerit Filius hominis in majestate sua, et omnes Angeli cum eo, tunc sedebit super sedem majestatis suæ."

<sup>8</sup> "Piis ergo gaudium erit Crux, . . . impiis ad confusionem" (Hortus Pastorum: Marchantius. Lib. i. Tr. iii. Lectio XXX., "De signis terribilibus judicium præcedentibus").

This Sovereign Judge by His dreadful command, a command which will be at once executed, will separate the good from the bad, placing the former on His right, the others on His left,<sup>1</sup> an eternal separation, after which the two bands will never more be together.

The separation accomplished, and the books of the conscience opened,<sup>2</sup> the malice of the evil and the contempt which they have used against God will be clearly seen ; and on the other hand will be seen the penitence of the good and the results of the grace of God which they have received, and nothing of it will be hidden.—O God, what confusion for the one, what consolation for the others !

Consider the final sentence on the bad : “Go, ye cursed, into eternal fire, which is prepared for the devil and his companions.”<sup>3</sup> Weigh these very weighty words. “Go,” He says ; it is a word of perpetual banishment which God declares for these unhappy ones, banishing them for ever from His family. He calls them “accursed.” O my soul, what a curse, a general curse which includes all the evil ; an irrevocable curse, which includes all time and eternity. He adds, “into eternal fire.”

Gaze, O my heart, on this great Eternity. O eternal eternity of pain, how frightful thou art !

Consider the contrary sentence on the good !<sup>4</sup>

“Come,” says the Judge. Ah ! it is the comfortable word of salvation by which God draws us to Himself, and receives us within the pale of His good-

<sup>1</sup> St Matt. xxv. 33, “Et statuet oves quidem a dextris suis, hædos autem a sinistris.”

<sup>2</sup> Dan. vii. 10, “Judicium sedit, et libri aperti sunt.”

<sup>3</sup> St Matt. xxv. 41, “Discedite a me maledicti in ignem æternum qui paratus est diabolo et angelis ejus.”

<sup>4</sup> S. Matt. xxv. 34, “Venite benedicti Patris mei, possidete paratum vobis regnum a constitutione mundi.”

ness. "Ye blessed of the Father!" O beloved blessing, which includes every blessing! "Receive the kingdom which is prepared for you from the foundation of the world!" O God, what a gift, for this kingdom will have no end.<sup>1</sup>

## AFFECTIONS AND RESOLUTIONS.

Tremble, O my soul, at the remembrance of this. O God, who can give me assurance for that day, in which the columns of heaven will tremble with fear!

Detest your sins, which alone can cast you away in that awful day.

Ah! I will judge myself now, that I be not judged. I will examine my conscience and condemn myself, accuse myself, correct myself, that the Judge may not condemn me on that dreadful day. I will therefore make my confession, I will accept the necessary counsels, etc.

## CONCLUSION.

Thank God, who has given you the means of assuring yourself on that day, and the time to do penance.

Offer Him your heart to do it. Pray Him that He will give you grace to perform it well. Pater noster, Ave Maria.

Make a nosegay.

<sup>1</sup> St Luke i. 33, "Et regni ejus non erit finis." Cf. Nicene Creed.

## CHAPTER XV

*Of Hell.**Meditation VII*

## PREPARATION.

Place yourself in the divine presence ;  
Humble yourself, and ask His assistance.

Imagine to yourself a dark city,<sup>1</sup> all burning, with brimstone and mephitic pitch, full of citizens who cannot leave it.<sup>2</sup>

## CONSIDERATIONS.

THE damned are within the infernal abyss, as if within this unhappy city, in which they suffer torments unspeakable in all their senses and in all their members. Because, as they have employed all their senses and all their members in sinning, so will they suffer in all their members and in all their senses the pains due to sin. Their eyes, for their false and evil looks, will suffer the horrible vision of the Devils and of hell !<sup>3</sup>

- <sup>1</sup> “ Per me si va nella città dolente,  
Per me si va nell’ eterno dolore,  
Per me si va tra la perduta gente.”

—Dante, *Inf.* iii. 1-3.

- <sup>2</sup> “ Lo buon Maestro disse : Omai, figliuolo,  
S’ appressa la città c’ ha nome Dite,  
Co’ gravi cittadin, col grande stuolo.  
Ed io : Maestro, già le sue meschite  
Là entro certo nella valle cerno  
Vermiglie, come se di fuoco uscite  
Fossero. Ed ei mi disse : Il foco eterno,  
Ch’ entro le affoca, le dimostra rosse,  
Come tu vedi in questo basso inferno.”

—Dante, *Inf.* viii. 67-75.

- <sup>3</sup> “ Così discesi del cerchio primo  
Già nel secondo, che men loco cinghia,  
E tanto più dolor, che pugne a guaio,

Their ears, for having taken pleasure in vicious conversation, will hear only mourning, lamentations, and despair.<sup>1</sup> So also with the others.

Besides all these torments, there is yet one still greater, the privation and loss of the glory of God, which they are for ever debarred from seeing.<sup>2</sup> If Absalom found that the loss of the loving face of his father was more trying than his exile,<sup>3</sup> O God, what is the regret of being for ever deprived of seeing thy sweet and gentle countenance?

Consider above all the eternity of these pains, which alone makes hell unbearable. Alas! if a flea in your ear or the heat of a little fever makes a short night so long and wearisome to us, how frightful will be the night of eternity with so many torments! Of this eternity are born eternal despair, infinite blasphemies and rage.<sup>4</sup>

Stavvi Minos orribilmente e ringhia;  
Esamina le colpe nell' entrata,  
Giudica e manda secondo che avvinghia."

—Dante, *Inf.* v. 1-6.

<sup>1</sup> "Quivi sospiri, pianti, ed alti guai  
Risonavan per l'aer senza stelle,  
Per ch' io al cominciar ne lagrimai.  
Diverse lingue, orribili favelle,  
Parole di dolore, accenti d' ira,  
Voci alte e fioche, e suon di man con elle."

—Dante, *Inf.* iii. 22-27.

<sup>2</sup> "Lasciate ogni speranza voi che entrate."

—Dante, *Inf.* iii. 9.

<sup>3</sup> 2 Kings xiv. 28, "Mansitque Absalom in Jerusalem duobus annis, et faciem regis non videt." V. 32, "Obsecro ergo ut videam faciem regis" (A.V., 2 Sam.).

<sup>4</sup> "So spake the apostate angel, though in pain,  
Vaunting aloud, but racked with deep despair."

—Paradise Lost, i, 125, 126.

## AFFECTIONS AND RESOLUTIONS.

Terrify your soul with the words of Job.<sup>1</sup> O my soul, couldst thou indeed live eternally with these everlasting burnings, and amid this devouring fire? Wilt thou indeed forsake Thy God forever?

Confess that you have merited it, and indeed how many times. Now henceforth I will take the opposite way. Why should I descend into this abyss? I will then make such and such an effort to avoid the sin which alone can give me this eternal death.

Be thankful, offer, pray.

## CHAPTER XVI

*Of Paradise.**Meditation VIII*

## PREPARATION.

Place yourself in the presence of God;  
Make the invocation.

## CONSIDERATIONS.

CONSIDER a fine night, quite calm, and think how pleasant it is to look at the heavens with the multitude and variety of stars. Now join this beauty with that of a fine day, in such a way that the brightness of the sun does not hinder the clear view of the stars and the moon,<sup>2</sup> and then say boldly that all this

<sup>1</sup> Migne reads "Isaie": Isa. xxxiii 14, "Quis poterit habitare de vobis cum igne devorante? quis habitabit ex vobis cum ardoribus sempiternis?"

<sup>2</sup> "Quale ne' plenilunii sereni  
Trivia ride tra le ninfe eterne,  
Che dipingono il ciel per tutti i seni,

beauty put together is nothing in comparison with the excellence of this great Paradise. How desirable and lovely is this place! How precious is this city!

Consider the nobility, the beauty, the multitude of the citizens and inhabitants of this happy country. These millions of millions of angels, of cherubim and seraphim, this company of apostles, of martyrs, of confessors, of virgins, of holy matrons? The multitude is innumerable.<sup>1</sup>

How happy is this company! To see the least of all is more beautiful than the sight of all the world! What will it be to see them all! My God, how happy they are! singing, as they always do, the sweet canticle of eternal love! How they always rejoice with continual cheerfulness! How they exchange one with another their ineffable pleasures, and live in the consolation of a happy and indissoluble society!<sup>2</sup>

Vid' io, sopra migliaia di lucerne  
Un sol che tutte quante l'accendea,  
Come fa il nostro le viste superne,  
E per la viva luce trasparea  
La lucente sustanzia tanto chiara,  
Che il viso mio non la sostenea."

—Dante, *Paradiso*, xxiii. 25-34.

<sup>1</sup> Rev. vii. 9, "Vidi turbam magnam quam dinumerare nemo poterat."

<sup>2</sup> "There David standes with harpe in hand  
As Maister of the Queere,  
'Tenne thousand times that man was blest  
That might this musicke hear.

Our Ladie singes magnificat  
With tune surpassinge sweete,  
And all the Virginns beare their parts  
Sittinge aboue her feete.

Te Deum doth Sant Ambrose singe,  
Saint Augustine dothe the like,

Consider, finally, how much benefit they have in rejoicing in God, who recompenses them always with His kindly look, and by it spreads within their hearts an abyss of delights. How good to be for ever united to their Prince.<sup>1</sup> There they are like happy birds,<sup>2</sup> who fly and sing always in the air of the divinity which surrounds them on all sides with unspeakable pleasure. There each one in emulation of the other, yet without envy, sings the praises of the Creator. Blessed art Thou for ever, O our sweet and sovereign Creator and Saviour, who art so good to us, and dost so freely communicate to us Thy glory! And in like manner does God bless all His saints, with an everlasting benediction. "Blessed be ye for ever," saith He, "my dear creatures who have served me, and who will praise me for ever with so great love and courage."

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Owld Simeon and Zacharie  
Have not their songes to seeke.

There Magdalene hath left her mone  
And cheerfullie doth singe  
With blessed Saints whose harmonie  
In everie streete doth ringe.

Hierusalem, my happie home,  
Would God I were in thee,  
Would God my woes were at an end,  
Thy joyes that I might see."

—F. B. P., c. 1600.

<sup>1</sup> "The Prince is ever in them,  
The daylight is serene;  
The pastures of the blessed  
Are deck'd in glorious sheen."

—Dr Neale, fr. the Rhythm of  
Bernard of Cluny, c. 1140.

<sup>2</sup> "Happy birds that sing and fly  
Round Thy altars, O Most High!

## AFFECTIONS AND RESOLUTIONS.

Admire and praise this heavenly country.<sup>1</sup> O how beautiful thou art, my beloved Jerusalem, and how happy are thy people! Reproach your heart for the little courage that it has shown up to now in being so far turned away from the way to this glorious dwelling. Why am I so far distant from my sovereign happiness? Ah! wretched man that I am, for pleasure so displeasing and so light, I have a thousand times over left these eternal and infinite delights. What spirit possessed me that I should despise benefits which are so desirable for desires so vain and despicable!

Aspire nevertheless with earnestness to this most delightful abode! Oh! may it be pleasing to Thee, my good and sovereign Lord, to make straight my steps again in Thy ways. Never more will I turn back! Let us go, my dear soul, let us go to this infinite rest. Let us journey to this blessed land which is promised to us!<sup>2</sup> What are we doing in this Egypt?

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Happier souls that find a rest  
In a heavenly Father's breast."

—Rev. Fr. Hy. Lyte, Ps. lxxxiv., 1834.

<sup>1</sup> "O sweet and blessed country,

The home of God's elect!

O sweet and blessed country,

That eager hearts expect!

Jesu, in mercy bring us

To that dear land of rest,

Who art with God the Father

And Spirit, ever Blest."

—Dr Neale, fr. Rhythm of  
Bernard of Cluny.

<sup>2</sup> Num. xiv. 40, "Et ecce mane primo surgentes ascenderunt verticem montis et dixerunt: Parati sumus ascendere ad locum de quo Dominus locutus est,"

I will keep myself away therefore from such things as lead me astray, or hinder me on the way. I will do such and such things as will be able to conduct me thither.

Give thanks, offer, pray.

## CHAPTER XVII

*By Way of the Election and Choice of Paradise.*

### *Meditation IX*

#### PREPARATION.

Place yourself in the presence of God ;  
Humble yourself before God, praying Him to inspire you.

#### CONSIDERATIONS.

**I**MAGINE yourself quite alone in a bare country with your good Angel, as the young Tobias<sup>1</sup> was when going to Rages, and that he points out to you on high Paradise opened, with the pleasures represented in the Meditation which you have made on Paradise ; then that he points out Hell below, opened with all the torments described in the Meditation on hell. Imagine yourself in this position, and on your knees before your good Angel.

Consider that it is quite true that you are in the midst between Paradise and Hell, and that one and the other is open to receive you, according to the choice you make.

<sup>1</sup> Tob. vi. 1, "Profectus est autem Tobias et canis secutus est eum, et mansit prima mansione juxta fluvium Tigris."

## THE CHOICE OF PARADISE 67

Consider that the choice you make of one or the other in this world will last eternally in the other.

And although both the one and the other be open to receive you, according as you choose, yet God, who is ready to give you either the one of His Justice, or the other of His Mercy, nevertheless desires with an incomparable desire that you may choose Paradise, and that your good angel may press you on with all his power, offering on God's behalf a thousand gifts, a thousand aids to help you in the ascent.

Jesus Christ from the height of heaven looks at you in His kindness, and gently invites you: "Come, dear soul, to eternal rest within the arms of My goodness, which has prepared for thee immortal delight in the abundance of its love." See with your inward eyes the Holy Virgin who invites you with a mother's love: "Courage, my daughter, do not scorn the desires of my Son, nor the sighs I breathe for thee, thirsting as I do with Him for thy eternal salvation." See the Saints who exhort you and the millions of holy souls who invite you sweetly, desiring only to see your heart joined one day to theirs in praising God forever, and assuring you that the way to heaven is not so hard as the world makes it. "Boldly," do they say to you, "devout soul! He who will look well at the way of devotion, by which we have ascended, will see that we have reached these delights by delights incomparably more sweet than those of the world."

### ELECTION.

O hell, I detest thee now and eternally, I detest thy torments and thy pains, I detest thy woeful and

unhappy eternity, and above all the eternal blasphemies and maledictions which thou dost cast up eternally against my God.<sup>1</sup> And turning my heart and my soul to thee, O beautiful Paradise, O eternal glory, O unending happiness, I choose my home and my rest once and for all in thy beautiful and blessed mansions, and in thy holy and pleasant tabernacles. I bless Thy mercy, O my God, and accept the offer Thou art pleased to make me. O Jesus, my Saviour, I accept Thy eternal love, and acknowledge the purchased possession thou hast assigned for me of a place<sup>2</sup> and a dwelling in this blessed Jerusalem, for nothing so much as to love Thee and bless Thee for ever.

Accept the blessings that the Virgin and the Saints present you ; promise them that you will walk with them. Stretch out your hand to your good angel, that he may lead you there.

Strengthen your soul in this choice.

<sup>1</sup> Dante, *Inf.* xxv. 1-4 :—

“ Al fine delle sue parole il ladro  
Le mani alzò con ambedue le fiche,  
Gridando : Togli, Dio, chè a te le squadro.  
Da indi in qua mi fur le serpi amiche.”

<sup>2</sup> Eph. i. 13, 14, “In quo et credentes signati estis spiritu promissionis sancto, qui est pignus hereditatis nostræ in redemptionem acquisitionis, in laudem gloriæ ipsius.”

## CHAPTER XVIII

*By the Way of the Election and Choice which the Soul makes of the Devout Life.*

### *Meditation X*

#### PREPARATION.

Place yourself in the presence of God ;  
Abase yourself before His face ; seek His aid.

#### CONSIDERATIONS.

**I**MAGINE yourself to be once more in a bare country and quite alone with your good Angel, and that on the left you see the Devil seated on a great throne high and lifted up, with several of the infernal spirits near him, and all around him a great company of worldlings, who all with bare head acknowledge him and do him homage, some for one sin, some for another.

Look at the countenances of all the unhappy courtiers of this execrable king ; notice that some are furious with hatred, envy, and anger ; that there are others who kill one another ; others are pale, pensive, and intent on making fortunes ; others mindful of vanity without any kind of pleasure but that which is useless or vain ; others vile, lost, and corrupted by their brutal affections. Look how they are all without repose, without order, without shame. Look how they despise one another, and how they only love themselves by false pretences. In short, you will see an unhappy state tyrannised over by this accursed king, and this will move you to compassion.

On the right side look at Jesus Christ crucified. With heartfelt love He prays for these poor devils, that they may come forth from this tyranny, and calls

them to Himself. Look at the great company of devout persons who are round Him with their angels.

Contemplate the beauty of this kingdom of devotion. How good it is to see this company of Virgins, men and women whiter than the lily; this assembly of widows full of holy mortification and humility. Look at this army of married persons who live quietly together, with the mutual respect which cannot exist without a large charity. Look how these devout souls wed the care of their outward household with the care of their inward duties, the love of husband with that of the heavenly Bridegroom. Look around on everything. You will see that all listen to our Lord in a holy, sweet, and gracious manner, and wish to place Him within their heart.

They rejoice but with a joy which is gracious, charitable, and well ordered. They love one another, but with a love which is sacred and altogether pure. Those of the devout who have afflictions do not torment themselves much, and do not lose their self-respect. In short, behold the eyes of the Saviour who consoles them, and how they all look up to Him together.

You have already left Satan with his sad and unhappy company by the good affections which you have framed. But you have not yet come to Jesus the King, nor joined His happy and holy company of the devout; indeed, you have been always between the one and the other.

The holy Virgin with St Joseph, St Louis, St Monica, and a hundred thousand others who are of the company of those who have lived in the world, invite you and encourage you.

The crucified King calls you by your own name. "Come, O My well-beloved, come that I may crown you."

## ELECTION.

O world! O hateful company, never will you see me under your banner. I have left your rage and vanity for ever. King of pride, O King of misery, infernal spirit, I renounce thee with all thy vain pomps, I detest thee with all thy works.

And turning to Thee, O blessed Jesus,<sup>1</sup> King of happiness and of eternal glory, I embrace Thee with all the strength of my soul; I adore Thee with all my heart, I choose Thee now and for ever as my King, and with inviolable faithfulness I do Thee irrevocable homage, I submit myself to the obedience of Thy holy laws and ordinances.

O holy Virgin, my dear Lady, I choose Thee as my guide, I place myself under Thy banner, I offer Thee particular regard and special reverence.

O my holy angel, present me to this holy company; do not abandon me until I reach this happy company, with which I now say and will say for ever, in witness of my choice, Glory be to Jesus, Glory be to Jesus.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> "Mon doux Jésus." Christopher Sutton, a contemporary of St Francis, in his "Meditations on the Most Holy Sacrament," uses frequently the expressions "O sweet Jesus," "O most sweet Jesus," which correspond with the "dulcis Jesu," "dulcissime Jesu" of the Latin, and the "Gesù dolce" of the Italian. There is reason for thinking that the "Blessed Jesus" of Jeremy Taylor was meant by him to be its equivalent. In the Frontispiece of the fourth edition of the "Holy Living" Jeremy Taylor is represented before the Lord in glory, with the legend on a beam of light, "Ad te quæcumque vocas, dulcissime Jesu." "O sweet Jesu" occurs once at least, but his usual phrase is, "O Blessed Jesus."

<sup>2</sup> "Vive Jésus, vive Jésus."

## CHAPTER XIX

*How we must make the General Confession.*

THESE, then, my dear Philothea, are the meditations requisite for our purpose. When you have made them, go courageously in the spirit of humility and make your general confession. But, I pray you, do not let yourself be troubled by any sort of apprehension. The scorpion which has stung us is venomous while it is stinging us, but when reduced to oil, it has great virtue against its own sting.<sup>1</sup> Sin is only shameful when we do it, but when converted into confession and penitence it is honourable and healthful. Contrition and confession are so beautiful and of such good savour that they blot out the foulness and remove the bad savour of sin. Simon the Leper<sup>2</sup> said that Magdalen was a sinner, but our Lord said she was not, and only spoke of the perfumes she had sprinkled, and the greatness of her charity.<sup>3</sup> If we are indeed humble, Philothea, our sin will displease us excessively, because God is offended with it; but the arraignment of sin will be sweet and agreeable, because God is honoured by it. It is for us a kind of relief to acknowledge to the Physician the evil which torments us. When you have arrived in the

<sup>1</sup> "Contra omnium araneorum morsus remedio sunt ipsi aranei in oleo putrefacti" (Plin. Hist. Nat. xxix. 2).

<sup>2</sup> St Luke vii. 39, "Videns autem Phariseus qui vocaverat eum, ait intra se dicens: Hic si esset Propheta, sciret utique, quæ et qualis est mulier, quæ tangit eum: quia peccatrix est."

<sup>3</sup> St Luke vii. 46, 47, "Oleo caput meum non unxisti: hæc autem unguento unxit pedes meos. Propter quod dico tibi: Remittuntur ei peccata multa, quoniam dilexit multum."

presence of your spiritual Father, imagine yourself on the Mount of Calvary, under the feet of Jesus Christ crucified, from whom the precious Blood drops from every part to wash you from your iniquities. For though it be not the very Blood of the Saviour, yet it is the merit of His Blood which is shed which sprinkles the penitents abundantly around the confessional. Open therefore your heart that you may bring out your sins by confession, for in proportion as they come out the precious merit of the divine passion will enter in and fill it with blessing.

But say everything simply and openly, satisfy your conscience in that once for all. And that done, listen to the counsel and the commands of the servant of God and say in your heart: "Speak, Lord, for Thy servant heareth."<sup>1</sup> Yes, it is God, Philothea, whom you hear, for He has said to His clergy, "He who heareth you, heareth Me."<sup>2</sup> Take afterwards in hand the following declaration, which will serve as a conclusion to all your contrition, and which you ought first to have meditated on and considered. Read it attentively and with as much feeling as you possibly can.

## CHAPTER XX

*A Solemn Declaration to engrave on the Soul the Resolution to serve God, and conclude the Acts of Penitence.*

I, THE undersigned, settled and established in the presence of God eternal, and of the heavenly Court, having considered the great mercy of His divine goodness to me, an all unworthy and mean

<sup>1</sup> 1 Kings iii. 9, "Loquere, Domine, quia audit servus tuus" (A.V., 1 Sam.).

<sup>2</sup> St Luke x. 16, "Qui vos audit, me audit."

creature, which He has created out of nothing, preserved, sustained, delivered from so many dangers, and overwhelmed with so many benefits: but above all, having considered the incomprehensible sweetness and clemency with which God in His great goodness has so kindly borne with me in my iniquities, so often and so graciously inspired me, inviting me to amend, and yet so patiently awaiting my penitence and repentance until this (N.) year of my age, notwithstanding all the ingratitude, disloyalty, and infidelity with which, by putting off my conversion and despising His gifts, I have so unwisely given Him offence—after having yet again considered that on the day of my holy baptism I was so happily and solemnly vowed and dedicated to my God to be His daughter, and that contrary to the profession which was then made in my name, I have so many times unhappily and miserably profaned and violated my spirit, applying it and using it against the divine Majesty—finally coming back again now to myself, prostrate in heart and spirit before the throne of divine justice, I acknowledge myself, I own and confess myself lawfully attainted and convicted of the crime of divine high treason, and guilty of the Death and Passion of Jesus Christ, by reason of the sins which I have committed, for which He died and suffered the torment of the cross; so that I am in consequence worthy of being for ever lost and damned.

But returning towards the throne of the infinite mercy of the same Eternal God, after having detested with all my heart and with all my strength the iniquities of my past life, I ask and pray humbly for grace and pardon and mercy, with entire absolution of my crime, by virtue of the Death and Passion of the same Lord and Redeemer of my soul; and leaning upon this as

on the sole foundation of my hope, I avow afresh and renew the sacred profession of faithfulness made on my behalf to God in my Baptism, renouncing the devil, the world, and the flesh; abhorring their unhappy suggestions, their vanities and lusts, for the rest of my present life, and for all eternity; and turning myself to God who is gentle and pitiful, I desire, propose, determine, and resolve irrevocably to serve Him and love Him now and for evermore, giving Him my spirit for this end, dedicating and consecrating it with all its faculties, my soul with all its powers, my heart with all its affections, my body with all its senses; declaring that I will never more abuse any part of my being against His divine will and sovereign Majesty, to whom I sacrifice and offer myself in spirit, to be for ever a loyal, obedient, and faithful creature to Him, without ever wishing to draw back or repent of my resolution. But, alas! if by the suggestion of the enemy, or by any human infirmity, it should happen that I should break in anything this my resolution and consecration, I declare from this day forth, and propose, by the grace of the Holy Spirit, to recover myself as soon as I perceive my fall, turning myself anew to the divine mercy without any delay or hesitation whatever. This is my will, my intention, my inviolable and irrevocable resolution, which I avow and confirm without reserve or exception, in the sacred presence of my God, in sight of the Church triumphant, and in the face of the Church militant, my mother, who hears this my declaration in the person of Him who as her officer hears me in this action. May it please Thee, O my eternal God, Almighty and All Holy, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, to confirm in me this resolution and accept this my heartfelt and inward service in the odour of sweetness. And as it has pleased Thee to

give me the inspiration and will to do it, give me also the power and the grace requisite to fulfil it. O my God, Thou art my God, God of my heart, God of my soul, God of my spirit. Thus I acknowledge and adore Thee now and to all eternity. Glory be to Jesus.<sup>1</sup>

## CHAPTER XXI

### *Conclusion of this First Purgation.*

THIS declaration made, be attentive, and open the ears of your heart, to hear in spirit the word of your absolution, which the very Saviour of your soul, seated on the throne of His mercy, will pronounce on high in heaven before all the Angels and Saints, at the same time that the priest in His name absolves you here below on earth: so that this whole company of the blessed will rejoice in your happiness and sing the spiritual Canticles with incomparable gladness, and will give the kiss of peace and communion to your heart, thus restored to grace and sanctified.

O God, Philothea, what an admirable contrast it is, by which you make a happy treaty with His divine Majesty, since in giving yourself to Him you gain Him and yourself also unto eternal life. It only remains for you to take the pen in hand, and sign with good heart the act of your declaration, and afterwards to go to the altar, where God on His part will sign and seal your absolution, and the promise of His Paradise that He will give you, placing Himself through the Sacrament as a sign and holy seal on your renewed heart. In this manner, it seems to me, Philothea, that your soul will be purged from sin and from all the affections of sin. But whereas these affections easily revive in

<sup>1</sup> "Vive Jésus."

the soul, by reason of our infirmity and lust, which can be mortified but not killed whilst we live here below on earth, I will give you such practical advice as will keep you henceforth from mortal sin and from all its affections, and will prevent it from ever having a place in your heart. And whereas the same advice serves still for a more perfect purification, before giving it to you, I wish to say something of this more absolute purity to which I desire to lead you.

## CHAPTER XXII

*That we must purge ourselves of the Affections we have for Venial Sins.*

AS the day advances we see more clearly in the glass the marks and stains on our face ; so also as the inward light of the Holy Spirit enlightens our consciences, we see more distinctly and more clearly the sins, inclinations, and imperfections which are able to hinder us from attaining to true devotion. And the same light which makes us see these blemishes and defects, kindles in us the desire of cleansing and purging ourselves of them.

You will discover, then, my dear Philothea, that besides mortal sins, and the affections of mortal sin which you have been purged of by the exercises above mentioned, you have still in your soul many inclinations and affections towards venial sins. I do not say that you will discover venial sins, but I do say that you will discover affections and inclinations to them. Now the one is very different from the other, for we can never be altogether pure from venial sins, at least so as to remain long in this purity. But we are well able to be without affection for venial

sins. Indeed, it is one thing to lie once or twice in lightness of heart in a matter of little importance, it is another thing to have pleasure in lying, and to be attached to this kind of sin.<sup>1</sup>

And I say now that we must purge our soul from all the affections which it has for venial sins,<sup>2</sup> that is to say, we must not in any way of our own accord cherish the will to continue and persevere in any kind of venial sin. For it would indeed be a baseness too great to wish to keep in real earnest in our conscience a thing so displeasing to God as is the will to displease Him willingly. Venial sin, however small it may be, is displeasing to God, though it may not displease Him to the extent of His wishing to condemn us or ruin us. If venial sin displeases Him, the will and the affection which we have for venial sin is nothing else but a resolution to wish to be displeasing to His divine Majesty.<sup>3</sup> Is it indeed possible that a soul well born should wish not only to displease its God, but to be fond of displeasing Him?

These affections, Philothea, are directly contrary to devotion as the affections for mortal sin are to charity.

<sup>1</sup> "Quandoque vero voluntas peccantis fertur ad id, quod in se continet quandam inordinationem, non tamen contrariatur dilectioni Dei et proximi: sicut verbum otiosum, risus superfluus, et alia hujus modi, et talia sunt venalia ex suo genere" (St Thom. Aq. Sum. ii. 1, Qu. lxxxviii. 2).

<sup>2</sup> "Consensus in dilectionem mortalis criminis mortale peccatum est. Respondeo dicendum, quod circa hoc aliqui diversi mode opiniati sunt. Quidam enim dixerunt quod consensus in dilectionem non est peccatum mortale, sed veniale tantum. Alii vero dixerunt quod est peccatum mortale, et hæc opinio est communior et verisimilior" (St Thom. Aq. Sum. ii. 1, Qu. lxxiv. 8).

<sup>3</sup> "In ratione superiori, cum consensu contingat in actum venialis peccati, potest esse veniale peccatum" (S. Thom. Aq. Sum. ii. 1, Qu. lxxiv. 9).

They weaken the strength of the spirit, hinder the divine consolations, open the door to temptations. And though they do not kill the soul, they make it excessively sick. "Dying flies" says the wise man, "spoil and mar the sweetness of the ointment."<sup>1</sup> He means that flies, when they scarcely rest on the ointment, but eat it in passing, only spoil what they take; the rest remains in its entirety; but when they die in the ointment, they take away its value, and make it worthless; so in like manner, venial sins, when they come to a devout soul and stop no length of time, do but little damage, but if these same sins dwell within the soul because of the affection which it has for them, they make it without doubt lose the sweetness of the ointment, that is, holy devotion.

Spiders do not kill the bees, but they spoil and taint the honey, and encumber the combs in such a way with the web which they make there that the bees are not able to fulfil their work; that is, when they stay there. So venial sin does not kill our soul, but yet it spoils devotion, and so encumbers the powers of the soul with bad habits and inclinations that it can no longer practise that promptness of charity in which lies devotion, that is, when venial sin dwells in our conscience by the affection which we show it. It is nothing, Philothea, to tell some little lie, to be a little unruly in word, in deed, in look, in dress, in mirth, in play, in dances, provided that as soon as these spiritual spiders enter our conscience, we chase them out and banish them as the bees do the spiders. But if we permit them to stay in our hearts, and not only that, but have pleasure in retaining and multiplying them, we shall soon see our honey spoilt, and the hive of our

<sup>1</sup> Eccles. x. 1, "Muscæ morientes perdunt suavitatem unguenti,"

conscience infected and destroyed. But I say once more, is it likely that a generous soul should take pleasure in displeasing God, should be fond of being disagreeable to Him, and really wish what it knows to be tiresome to Him?

### CHAPTER XXIII

*That we must purge ourselves of the Affections for Things which are Useless and Dangerous.*

GAMES, balls, feasts, pageants, comedies are in themselves in no wise bad things, but indifferent. Though it is possible for them to be practised well or badly, yet they are always dangerous; and to be fond of them is still more dangerous. I say, then, Philothea, that although it is lawful to play and dance and dress, to hear decent comedies, to feast, yet to have a fondness for them is contrary to devotion, and extremely hurtful and perilous. It is not evil to do it, but it is to be fond of it. It is a pity to sow in the soil of our heart affections so vain and so strong. They occupy the place of good impressions and prevent the sap of the soul from being used for good inclinations.

Thus the ancient Nazarenes<sup>1</sup> abstained not only from all that could intoxicate them, but also from grapes and verjuice; not that the grapes and the juice made them drunk, but because there was the danger in tasting the juice of exciting the desire to eat grapes, and in eating grapes to sharpen the appetite for drink-

<sup>1</sup> Num. vi. 3, "A vino, et omni quod inebriare potest, abstinebunt. Acetum ex vino, et ex qualibet alia potione, et quicquid de uva exprimitur, non bibent: uvas recentes siccasque non comedent."

ing grape-juice or wine. Now I do not say that we cannot use these dangerous things, but I do say that we can never set our affection on them without prejudicing devotion.

Stags that have put on too much grease go aside and retire within the thickets, knowing that their grease lies heavy on them, that they are not fit to run if perchance they were attacked. The heart of man, if it burdens itself with these useless, superfluous, and dangerous affections, is doubtless not able promptly, readily, easily to run after its God, who is the true mark of devotion. Little children amuse themselves and get warm after butterflies; no one finds fault with it, because they are children. But is it not ridiculous, or rather lamentable, to see men who are grown up show themselves eager and fond of such unworthy trifles as are the things I have named, which besides being useless in themselves put us in danger of demoralising and disordering ourselves in their pursuit?

It is for this reason, my dear Philothea, that I tell you that we should purge ourselves from these affections; and although the acts are not always contrary to devotion, yet the affections are always hurtful to it.<sup>1</sup>

## CHAPTER XXIV

*That we must purge ourselves from Evil Inclinations.*

WE have still, Philothea, certain natural inclinations which, not having taken their origin from our particular sins, are not properly sins, either mortal or venial, but are called imperfections, and their acts faults and failures. For instance, St Paula, according

<sup>1</sup> Cf. part iii. chaps. xxxiii., xxxiv.

to the account of St Jerome,<sup>1</sup> had a great inclination to sadness and regret, so that on the death of her children and her husband she always ran the chance of dying of grief; this was an imperfection and not a sin, since it was against her consent and her will. There are some who are naturally buoyant, others sour; some slow to receive another's opinions; some are inclined to indignation, others to anger, others to love. And in short, few persons are found in whom we are not able to note such imperfections. Now, though they are as it were proper and natural to each one, yet by a contrary care and affection we can correct and moderate them, and even free ourselves and purge ourselves from them. And I tell you, Philothea, that we must do it. Means have been found of changing bitter almond-trees into sweet, by merely piercing them at the foot to allow the sap to come out; why is it that we cannot make our perverse inclinations come out, that we may become better? There is no temper so good that it cannot be made bad by vicious habits; there is no temper so stubborn that may not by the grace of God in the first place, and then by industry and diligence, be subdued and overcome. I have then now given the advice and proposed the exercises by means of which you will purge your soul of dangerous affections, of imperfections, and of all affection for venial sins, and so will more and more assure your conscience against all mortal sin. God give you grace to use them well.

<sup>1</sup> "Suorum mortibus frangebatur Paula, maxime liberorum; nam et in viri et in filiarum dormitione semper periclitata est" (St Jer. Epitaph. Paulæ).

# THE SECOND PART OF THE INTRODUCTION

CONTAINING

VARIOUS COUNSELS FOR THE LIFTING UP OF THE SOUL  
TO GOD BY PRAYER AND BY THE SACRAMENTS.

## CHAPTER I

### *Of the Necessity of Prayer.*

PRAYER, by setting our understanding in the brightness of divine light, and exposing our will to the warmth of heavenly love, is able more than anything else to cleanse our understanding of its ignorance and our will of its corrupt affections. It is the water of blessing which by its sprinkling makes the plants of our good desires to bud and to blossom, washes our souls of their imperfections, and quenches the passions of our hearts.<sup>1</sup>

Above all I counsel the practice of mental prayer,<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> "Vere dignum et justum est, etc. Supermitte quæsumus virtutem Spiritus sancti tui super hanc creaturam: ut fiat *aqua sanctificata* in nomine Patris et Filii et Spiritus sancti. Te igitur ins. . . et petimus: ut nos exaudias, et miserearis precibus nostris: quatenus ubicumque hæc aqua aspersa fuerit, fiat te jubente causa purificationis" (Præf. in Off. Bened. Aquas quæ sit in Vigilia Epiphaniæ; Rit. Rom. Venet., 1649).

<sup>2</sup> The author of the "Spiritual Combat" distinguishes between mental prayer (chap. xlv.) and meditation (chap. xlv.). St Francis de Sales, from his familiarity with the writings of the Jesuits and the Spanish mystics, regards meditation as the highest form if not the only practical form of mental prayer. Da Ponte writes in his "Introduction to the Meditations," "So high and sovereign is the exercise of

the prayer of the heart, and particularly that which concerns itself with the Life and Passion of our Lord.<sup>1</sup>

mental prayer, in which we meditate upon the mysteries of our holy faith and converse familiarly with Almighty God, that the principal master of it can be no other than the Holy Ghost." "The Spiritual Exercises" of St Ignatius Loyola were in the sixteenth century the model of all mental prayer and meditation. A copy of these Exercises had been given by Ignatius to Matth. Ori, the Inquisitor of the Faith in Paris, in 1528 or 1529, when an effort had been made to condemn him (Maffée, *Vie. de B. H. Pr. de Loy.*, liv. i.). St Teresa says, "As my sins multiplied, I began to lose the pleasure and comfort I had in virtuous things; and that loss contributed to the abandonment of prayer." To her prayer meant mental prayer: "I thought it would be better for me . . . to live like the multitude—to say the prayer which I was bound to say, and that vocally; not to practise mental prayer, nor commune with God so much" (*Vita*, vi. vii.). She had begun the practice about 1535 or 1536, when she was presented by her uncle, Don Petro de Cepeda, with a book called "Tercer Abecedario," which treated of the prayer of recollection (*Vita*, iv.). The "Imitatio" mentions the practice among the religious exercises: "Nunquam sis ex toto otiosus; sed aut legens, aut scribens, aut orans, aut meditans . . ." (i. 19). The "Godly Meditations on the Most Holy Sacrament," by Christopher Sutton, testify to the practice in the Church of England in the time of St Francis de Sales. Mental prayer does not take the place which it ought to take in the "Holy Living" of Jeremy Taylor, although the practice is alluded to: "It helps much to attention and actual advertisement in our prayers, if we say our prayers intently without the voice, only by the spirit. For in mental prayer, if our thoughts wander, we only stand still; when our mind returns, we go on again; there is none of the prayer lost, as it is, if our mouths speak and our hearts wander" ("Holy Living," 4th Ed. 1654). Sherlock's "Practical Christian" is largely made up of meditations, but they are not on the lines of the older method. The practice of mental prayer was one of the most fruitful sources of the spiritual revival of the nineteenth century.

<sup>1</sup> "When a longer time is to be employed in prayer, as half an hour, an hour, or even more, it is advisable to form

By gazing on Him frequently in meditation, your whole soul will be filled with Him, you will learn His ways, and will form your actions on the model of His. He is the Light of the World.<sup>1</sup> It is therefore in Him, through Him, and for Him that we ought to be brightened and enlightened. He is the tree of desire under whose shadow we ought to be refreshed.<sup>2</sup> He is the living well of Jacob, for the cleansing of all our stains.<sup>3</sup> Children, by listening to their mothers and prattling with them, learn to speak their language. And we, living near the Lord in meditation, and observing His words, His actions, and His affections, shall learn by his grace to speak, to act, and to will as He does. There you must stay, Philothea; and believe me, we cannot go to God the Father but by this door.<sup>4</sup> For as the glass of a mirror could not reflect our form unless it was covered at the back with foil or lead, so the divinity could not be contemplated in this world below, were it not united to the sacred humanity of the Saviour, whose life and death are the most fitting, the sweetest, the most delicious and most profitable object we can choose for our ordinary meditation.<sup>5</sup> The Saviour does not call Himself for

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a meditation on some point of our Lord's life and Passion" ("Spiritual Combat," chap. xlv.).

<sup>1</sup> St John viii. 12, "Ego sum lux mundi."

<sup>2</sup> Cant. ii. 3, "Sicut malus inter ligna silvarum, sic dilectus meus inter filios. Sub umbra illius, quem desideraveram, sedi."

<sup>3</sup> St John iv. 6, "Erat autem ibi fons Jacob." V. 11, "Unde ergo habes aquam vivam." V. 14, "Aqua, quam ego dabo ei, fiet in eos fons aquæ salientis in vitam æternam."

<sup>4</sup> St John xiv. 6, "Ego sum via, et veritas, et vita: nemo venit ad Patrem, nisi per me." X. 7, "Ego sum ostium ovium."

<sup>5</sup> Cf. "Spiritual Combat," chap. xlv., "It is advisable to form a meditation on some point of our Lord's life or Passion."

nothing the Bread which came down from heaven ;<sup>1</sup> for as bread ought to be eaten with all kinds of meats, so also ought the Saviour to be meditated upon, thought over, and searched for in all our prayers and actions. His life and death have been arranged and divided under many heads of meditation by various writers. Those whom I recommend to you are St Bonaventura,<sup>2</sup> Bellintani,<sup>3</sup> Bruno,<sup>4</sup>

The Meditations of Bruno, which were amongst those recommended by St Francis, are entitled, "*De præcipuis Mysteriis vitæ et passionis D. N. Jesu Christi.*" St Teresa used to say "that the consideration of the Passion of the Lord was the way of prayer, by which all ought to begin, to continue, and to end, and that that way was most safe and excellent, until God shall lead us to other supernatural paths" (Ribera, iv. 75, 76).

<sup>1</sup> St John vi. 41, "Ego sum panis vivus, qui de cælo descendi."

<sup>2</sup> St Bonaventura ; Franciscan, "Doctor Seraphicus," *ob.* 1274. Among his writings are the "Life of our Lord," the "Itinerary of the Soul to God," and his "Amoris Divini Elixir, ex Passione Christi." His meditations are referred to in a letter to the Abbess of Puy d'Orbe, Oct. 13, 1604, and in another to Madame de Chantal, Oct. 14, 1604. The first stanza of the Laudismus de S. Croce, by St Bonaventura, speaks of the value of meditation :—

"Recordare sanctæ crucis  
Qui perfectam viam ducis,  
Delectare jugiter.  
Sanctæ crucis recordare  
Et in ipsa meditare  
Insatiabiliter."

—Dan. Thes. ii. 101.

<sup>3</sup> Bellintani ; Capuchin. His meditations are recommended in letters dated May 3 and Oct. 9 ; in another dated Oct. 13, 1604, his book is referred to as a treatise on mental prayer.

<sup>4</sup> Fr. Vincent Bruno ; Jesuit. His "Meditations on the Life and Passion of the Lord" were written in Italian ; a Latin translation was published at Cologne in 3 vols. 12mo in 1624. They are referred to in a letter, dated Oct. 9, 1624, to the Abbess of Puy d'Orbe.

Capiglia,<sup>1</sup> Granada,<sup>2</sup> Da Ponte.<sup>3</sup>

Employ an hour a day in meditation before dinner if possible, in the early part of your morning's work, because you will have your mind less troubled, and fresher after the night's rest. Do not spend more than one hour in it,<sup>4</sup> unless your spiritual father expressly tells you to do so.

<sup>1</sup>D. Andrea Capiglia; Carthusian. His "Meditations" are recommended to the Abbess of Puy d'Orbe in the letters, dated Oct. 9 and Oct 13, 1604. The "Meditations" of Bruno and Capiglia are suggested for use on Sundays and Festivals, Bellintani and Granada for the rest of the year.

<sup>2</sup>Luis de Granada; Dominican; *ob.* 1568. His "Libro de le Oracion y Meditacion" was published at Salamanca in 1567. His "True Way" is especially commended to the Abbess of Puy d'Orbe, as a beginning in meditation, in the letter of Oct. 9, 1604. The editor of Migne considers this to be the "Guida de Pecadores" published at Salamanca in 1570. A French translation appeared at Paris in 1624. It was translated into English under the title of "The Sinner's Guide," by Richard Meres, in 1598. It seems more probable that the reference is to the meditations on the Passion contained in the "Book of Prayer and Meditation."

<sup>3</sup>Luis da Ponte, Jesuit; *ob.* 1624. His "Meditations" were translated into English by John Heigham within a quarter of a century of his death. They follow the order and form set forth in the spiritual exercises of St Ignatius. The first part is for beginners in the Purgative Way, and consists of meditations on sin and the four last things. The second, third, and fourth parts are for proficients in the Illuminative Way, and comprise the Mysteries of the Incarnation and Infancy, the Life and Passion of our Blessed Lord. The fifth and sixth parts are for the perfect in the Christian Way, and consist of Meditations on the Resurrection and Ascension, the Coming of the Holy Ghost, and the Mysteries of the Holy Trinity.

<sup>4</sup>"When a longer time is to be employed in prayer, as half an hour, an hour, or even more, it is advisable to form a meditation" ("Spir. Comb.," chap. xlv.) In a letter to Madame la Présidente Brulart, Oct, 9, 1604, he recommends half an hour of mental prayer.

If you are able to make this meditation in church, and find sufficient quiet there, it will be the easier and more convenient for you, because neither father nor mother nor wife nor husband nor anything whatsoever can altogether prevent you from staying an hour in church, whereas when you are in any kind of subjection, you cannot promise yourself so free an hour in your own house.

Begin all kinds of prayer, whether mental or vocal, in the presence of God, and keep this rule without exception.<sup>1</sup> You will see in a short time how profitable it will be for you.

If you are ruled by me, you will say your *Pater*, your *Ave Maria*, and the *Credo*, in Latin; <sup>2</sup> but you will learn also to understand the words which are in them in your own language, that while saying them in the common language of the Church, you may be able nevertheless to taste the wonderful and delicious sense of these holy prayers. You must say them indeed, fixing your thought profoundly on them, and stirring up your affections on their sense, in no way hurrying to say many of them, but studying to say what you do say heartily. A single *Pater* said thoughtfully is worth more than several recited quickly and hastily.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> In the letter to the Abbess of Puy d'Orbe, Oct. 9, 1604, he writes: "Always make your entrance into prayer by placing yourself in the presence of God." Da Ponte writes: "First we are to lift up our heart and the faculties of our soul to God our Lord, beholding Him as He is there present with an interior, attentive, reverent, and loving regard" (Introd. to "Med." chap. v., "On Entrance into Prayer").

<sup>2</sup> "When men say Matins and Evensong privately, they may say the same in any language that they themselves do understand" (First Prayer Book, 1545). The practice of using the Lord's Prayer in Latin is illustrated by "Laud's Devotions," Oxf. 1669.

<sup>3</sup> "God hears us not the sooner for our many words, but

The chaplet is a very useful means of prayer, if you know how to say it in the right way ; and to do this, have some one of the little books which teach you the way to recite it.<sup>1</sup> It is also a good thing to say the Litanies of Our Lord, of Our Lady, and of the Saints,<sup>2</sup> and all the other vocal prayers which are in the

much the sooner for an earnest desire. . . . A long prayer and a short differ not in their capacities of being accepted ; for both of them take their value according to the fervency of spirit and the charity of the prayer " (Jeremy Taylor, "Holy Living," chap. iv. § 7).

<sup>1</sup> The chaplet or rosary was instituted by St Dominic as a means of counteracting the abuses of the Albigensians. "It is a devotion wherein by fifteen decades, consisting each of one Pater, ten Aves and one Gloria Patri, we are taught to know our Divine Redeemer in the fifteen principal mysteries of His sacred life, and of His Blessed Mother " ("Manual of the Living Rosary," Dublin, 1841). The first chaplet of the rosary contains the five Joyful Mysteries ; the second chaplet, the five Sorrowful Mysteries ; the third chaplet, the five Glorious Mysteries. St Francis himself drew up three little books on the "Méthode pour réciter dévotement le Chapelet," Migne, vol. vi. 79-84.

<sup>2</sup> The number of unauthorised litanies was so great at the close of the sixteenth century that Pope Clement VIII., by the constitution "Sanctissimus" in 1601, restricted their use. The three Litanies of Our Lord, of Our Lady, and of the Saints were authorised by reason of their antiquity ; all others were to be submitted to the Congregation of Rites. The Litany of Our Lord and of the Name of Jesus, which was indulgenced by the Bull "Reddituri" of Pope Sixtus V. in 1587, has been ascribed to the Preachers of the Name of Jesus, Bernardinus and John Capistran, in the beginning of the fifteenth century. The Litany of Our Lady, or the Litany of Loretto, also indulgenced by the Bull "Reddituri," may perhaps have been composed at Loretto. The Litany of the Saints in its simplest form is traceable to the Gregorian Sacramentaries, and is the only one which has been incorporated into the liturgical services of the Church (Fluck. Kathol. Liturgik. ii. 107-134). The Litany of the Saints is the origin of the English Litany of 1544.

Manuals and authorised Hours,<sup>1</sup> provided that if you have the gift of mental prayer you will give it always the principal place. If after this latter, whether from pressure of business or for some other reason, you cannot use your vocal prayers, you need not trouble about it, contenting yourself by saying simply before or after the meditation, the Lord's Prayer, the Angelic Salutation, and the Apostles' Creed.

If when saying your vocal prayers you feel your heart attracted and invited to inward or mental prayer, do not repress it, but let your spirit flow in this direction. Do not mind leaving the vocal prayers you had proposed for yourself unfinished, for the mental prayer that you will have practised in their place is more agreeable to God, and more useful to your soul. I except the office of the Church, if you are under obligation to say it;<sup>2</sup> in that case, you must fulfil your duty.

<sup>1</sup> These were for the laity what the breviary was to the clergy. They correspond to the earlier primers and oraria of the sixteenth century in England. The Hours of Prayers were observed in the later Reformed primers. On the arrival of Queen Henrietta Maria in England in 1625, she and her French ladies were surprised and dissatisfied at the disregard of the Hours of Prayer. Their remarks, and the beauty of many of their books, induced the Protestant ladies of the Household to apply to King Charles. The king consulted the Bishop of Carlisle (White), and he, convinced of the necessity of such a book of devotion, instructed Dr John Cosin to frame a manual. This manual, known as Bishop Cosin's "Devotions," was published with the *imprimature* of the Bishop of London, Feb. 22, 1626. Cf. the editor's Preface to London edition of 1838. Henri IV. of France and Marie de Medici both held the "Devout Life" of St Francis in the highest esteem, and their daughter, as Queen of England, seems to have so far valued its counsels as to influence Charles in calling for a Book of Hours.

<sup>2</sup> "And all Priests and Deacons shall be bound to say daily the Morning and Evening Prayer, either privately or openly,

If it should happen that your whole morning have passed without this sacred exercise of mental prayer, from the pressure of business or any other cause (which you should take care to prevent as much as possible), try and make good the omission after dinner, at some hour as far distant as possible from the meal. If you do it too soon after, and before the digestion is well advanced, you will be overcome by drowsiness, and your health will suffer.

If you are unable to practise it for a whole day, you must repair the loss by increasing your ejaculatory prayers, and by reading some book of devotion, with some act of penance, which will prevent the repetition of the failure ; and together with this, make a strong resolution to start afresh the following day.<sup>1</sup>

## CHAPTER II

*A Short Method for Meditation ; and First of the Presence of God, which is the First Point of the Preparation.*

BUT you do not perhaps know, Philothea, how to practise mental prayer, for it is a matter unhappily which few people know in our day. It is for this reason that I present to you a simple and short method for it, until by reading some of the excellent books which have been written on the subject, and especially by practice, you will be more fully instructed in it. I note first the preparation. This consists of two points, of which the first is to place yourself in the

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except they be letted by preaching, studying of divinity, or by some other urgent cause" (Pref. to Prayer Book of 1552).

<sup>1</sup> The "Vita et Doctrina Jesu Christi" of Avancini, and Fr. Benson's "Benedictus Domino," are excellent to-day as a model of systematic meditation. They are short.

presence of God, and the second to invoke His aid. To place yourself in the presence of God, I propose to you four principal means, of which you will make use at the beginning.

The first consists in a living and attentive apprehension of the all-prevailing presence of God, that is to say, that God is in everything and everywhere, and that there is neither place nor thing in this world where He is not by an actual presence; so that just as the birds, wherever they fly, always meet with the air, so, wherever we go, wherever we are, we find God present. Every one knows this truth, but every one is not attentive to grasp it. The blind, though they do not see the prince who is present with them, do not neglect to show him respect if they are told of his presence;<sup>1</sup> but it is a fact that because they do not see him, they easily forget that he is present, and being forgetful of it they lose still more easily their respect and their reverence. Alas! Philothea, we do not see God, Who is present with us; and although faith tells us of His presence, yet since we do not see Him with our eyes, we often forget Him and behave as if God were far from us. For though we know well that He is present in everything, yet not thinking of it, it is as if we knew it not. It is for this reason that we must always before prayer stir up our soul to an attentive thought and consideration of this presence of God. This was the thought of David when he wrote: "If I climb up into heaven, O my God, Thou art there; if I go down to hell, Thou art there also."<sup>2</sup> And thus should we use the words of Jacob,

<sup>1</sup> "If a man is to speak with a prince, it is necessary that he go to his palace, or to the place where he is, and present himself before him" (Da Ponte, Intr. to "Med. Ch. v.").

<sup>2</sup> Ps. cxxxviii, 8, "Si ascendero in cœlum, tu illic es: si descendero in infernum, ades" (A. V., Ps. cxxxix.).

when he saw the sacred ladder: "How dreadful is this place!" he said. "Surely God is in this place, and I knew nothing of it!"<sup>1</sup> He means to say that he was not thinking of it; for he could not but know that God was in everything and everywhere. When you come therefore to prayer, you must say with all your heart and to your heart, "O my heart, my heart, God is everywhere."

The second means of placing yourself in this sacred presence is to think that not only is God present in the place where you are, but that He is most particularly in your heart, and at the very bottom of your spirit, which He vivifies and animates with His divine presence, being there as the heart of your heart, and the spirit of your spirit. For as the soul, being spread through the whole body, is present in all its parts,<sup>2</sup> and dwells nevertheless in the heart with a special presence; so also God, being altogether present in everything, yet is always present in a special manner in our spirit. And for this reason David calls God, "God of my heart,"<sup>3</sup> and St Paul said, "We live and move and have our being in God."<sup>4</sup> In the consideration therefore of this truth, you will stir up in

<sup>1</sup> Gen. xxviii. 17, "Pavensque, Quam terribilis est, inquit, locus iste!" V. 16, "Vere Dominus est in loco isto, et ego nesciebam."

<sup>2</sup> St Aug. "De Orig. animæ," Ep. 166: "Per totum quippe corpus, quod animat, non locali diffusionem, sed quadam vitali intentione porrigitur. Nam per omnes ejus particulas tota simul adest, nec minus in minoribus, et in majoribus major, sed alicubi intensius, alicubi remissius, et in omnibus tota, et in singulis tota est" (St Aug. Op. tom. iii. p. 585).

<sup>3</sup> Ps. lxxii. 26, "Deus cordis mei" (A.V., Ps. lxxiii.). The Vulg. agrees with LXX., but A.V., "God the strength of my heart," with Hebrew.

<sup>4</sup> Acts xvii. 28, "In ipso enim vivimus, et movemur, et sumus."

your heart a great reverence for God, who is so intimately present in it.

The third means is to consider our Saviour, who in His humanity beholds from heaven all the people of the world, but especially Christians, who are His children,<sup>1</sup> and more especially those who are at prayer, whose actions and behaviour He observes. Now this is not simple imagination, but real truth; for, although we see Him not, yet from above He observes us. St Stephen saw Him thus at the time of his martyrdom.<sup>2</sup> We can indeed say with the Bride: "Behold, He standeth behind the wall, He seeth through the windows, He looketh through the lattice."<sup>3</sup>

The fourth way consists in making use of the simple imagination, representing to ourselves the Saviour in His sacred humanity, as if He were near to us, in the same manner as we are in the habit of representing to ourselves our friends, and of saying, "I think I see such an one doing this or that," "I seem to see him," and such-like expressions. But if the most holy Sacrament of the altar should be present, then would this presence be real, and not merely imaginary; for the elements and form of the bread would be like a curtain behind which our Lord, Who is really present, sees us and observes us, though we do not see Him in His own form. You will therefore make use of one of these four means of placing your soul in the presence of God before prayer.

<sup>1</sup> The Fatherhood of our Lord Jesus Christ. "Our Saviour, who in His humanity . . . beholds Christians who are His children." This explains the difficult phrase in chap. xvi., "the Mother of our Sovereign Father." Cf. Litany of the Name of Jesu, "Jesu, pater futuri sæculi," and Isa. ix. 6.

<sup>2</sup> Acts vii. 55, "Ecce video cælos apertos, et Filium hominis stantem a dextris Dei."

<sup>3</sup> Cant. ii. 9, "En ipse stat post parietem nostrum: respiciens per fenestras, prospiciens per cancellos."

You must not be desirous of employing them all together, but only one at a time, and that briefly and simply.<sup>1</sup>

## CHAPTER III

*Of the Invocation, the Second Point of the Preparation.*

THE invocation is made in this manner. Your soul, feeling itself in the presence of God, prostrates itself with the utmost reverence,<sup>2</sup> knowing itself to be quite unworthy to dwell before so sovereign a Majesty. And yet knowing that the same goodness wills it to be so, it asks of Him the grace to serve Him and adore Him in this meditation. And if you wish it, you can make use of certain short and glowing words, such as these of David : "Cast me not away, O my God, from Thy presence, and take not the grace of Thy Holy Spirit from me";<sup>3</sup> "Show the light of Thy countenance upon Thy servant, and I will consider Thy marvellous works";<sup>4</sup> "Give me understanding and I shall keep Thy law, yea, I shall keep it with my whole

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Jeremy Taylor, "Holy Living": "Practise of the Presence of God" (chap. i. § 3).

<sup>2</sup> "Secondly, this done (*i.e.* the act of the Presence of God), I must make a great and profound reverence to the Majesty of God, bending before Him the knees of my heart and of my body, once, twice, and three times, as they do that enter into the presence of kings" (Da Ponte, "Intr. to Med." chap. v.). In extraordinary, casual, and ejaculatory prayers, the reverence and devotion of the soul, and the lifting of the eyes and hands to God, with any other position not indecent, is usual and commendable" (Jer. Taylor, "Holy Living," chap. iv.).

<sup>3</sup> Ps. l. 13, "Ne projicias me a facie tua: et spiritum sanctum tuum ne auferas a me" (A.V., Ps. li.).

<sup>4</sup> Ps. cxviii. 135, "Faciem tuam illumina super servum tuum: et doce me justificationes tuas" (A.V., Ps. cxix.).

heart";<sup>1</sup> "I am Thy servant,"<sup>2</sup> "Give me the Spirit," and such-like words. It will be useful to you to add the invocation of your good angel, and of the sacred personages<sup>3</sup> who are found in the mystery on which you are about to meditate. For instance, in that on the death of our Lord, you will be able to invoke our Lady, St John, the Magdalene, the good thief, that the feelings and inward motions which they received there may be communicated to you; and in the meditation on your death, you could invoke your good angel,<sup>4</sup> who will be present, that he may inspire you with suitable considerations. And so also with the other mysteries.

#### CHAPTER IV

##### *Of the Proposition of the Mystery, the Third Point of the Preparation.*

AFTER these two ordinary points of the meditation, there is a third which is not common to all kinds of meditation. It is that which some call the com-

<sup>1</sup> Ps. cxviii. 34, "Da mihi intellectum, et scrutabor legem tuam: et custodiam illam in toto corde meo" (A.V., Ps. cxix.).

<sup>2</sup> Ps. cxviii. 125, "Servus tuus sum ego" (A.V., Ps. cxix.).

<sup>3</sup> "To merit the protection of the holy angels and of all the saints which are in heaven, here are two means you ought to make use of. The first will be to address yourself first of all to the Eternal Father. . . . The second will be to invoke those glorious spirits, who not only wish that we may become perfect as they are, but that we may be even raised above them in glory." "Never forget to call upon the Holy Virgin, who is the Queen of all the Saints, nor your good angel, nor the glorious Archangel St Michael, nor the other saints for whom you have a particular devotion" ("Spiritual Combat," chap. l.).

<sup>4</sup> "You will pray them to aid you to rid yourself of your vices, and to overcome the enemies of your salvation, but

position of the place,<sup>1</sup> and others the inward reading. Now this is nothing else than the putting before our imagination the subject of the mystery on which we wish to meditate, as if it were taking place really and truly in our presence. For instance, if you wish to meditate upon our Lord on the Cross,<sup>2</sup> you will imagine yourself on the Mount of Calvary; and that you are seeing all that is done there, and all that is said on the day of the Passion; or if you wish it (for it is all one) you will imagine to yourself that in the very place where you are the Crucifixion of our Lord is taking place, in the manner in which the Evangelists describe it. I would say the same, when you meditate on

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particularly to assist you in the hour of death" ("Spir. Combat," chap. l.).

<sup>1</sup> "Fabrication du lieu." "The first prelude is the composition of the place. It should be noticed here that if the subject of the contemplation or of the meditation is a visible thing, as it is in the contemplation of the mysteries of our Lord Jesus Christ, this prelude will consist in representing to myself by the aid of the imagination the actual place where the object on which I wish to meditate is found; for instance, the temple, the mountain where Jesus Christ or Our Lady is, according to the mystery that I here choose for my contemplation. If the subject of the meditation is an invisible thing, such as sin, the composition of the place will be to see with the eyes of the imagination my soul imprisoned in this mortal body, and myself, that is my body and my soul, in this valley of tears, as an exile among the beasts who are deprived of reason" (St Ign., "Spir. Exercises," wk. i. Ex. i.; Cp. Da Ponte, "Intr. to Med." chap. vii., "To form within ourselves some figure or image of the things we intend to meditate on.")

<sup>2</sup> "If, then, for example, you have chosen for the subject of your meditation the Crucifixion of this Man-God, among the many circumstances of the mystery, you will pause at those which follow. Consider, (1) that Jesus having reached Calvary, the executioners strip Him with violence, and tear off His skin, which is all torn by the scourge, and is sticking to His clothes by the blood which has flowed from His wounds," etc. ("Spiritual Combat," ch. li.).

death, as I have noted in the meditation on that subject.<sup>1</sup> So also with regard to that on hell, and in all similar mysteries,<sup>2</sup> where it concerns things invisible and sensible. As to the other mysteries of the greatness of God, of the excellence of the virtues, of the end for which we are created, all of which are visible things,<sup>3</sup> it is not a question of wishing to make use of this kind of imagination. It is true that we can indeed employ some similitude and comparison, to aid in the consideration; but this is somewhat difficult to find, and I only wish to deal with you quite simply, and in such a way that your mind may not be too much troubled to use the imagination. Now by means of this imagination we shut up our mind in the mystery on which we wish to meditate, that it may not run hither and thither, neither more nor less than we shut up a bird in a cage, or fasten the hawk to its jesses that it may rest upon the fist. Some will tell you nevertheless that it is better to make use of the simple thought of faith, and a simple apprehension altogether mental and spiritual in the presentation of these mysteries, or indeed to consider that they are taking place in your own mind, but that is too subtle for the

<sup>1</sup> Part. i. chap. xiii.

<sup>2</sup> Part. i. chap. xv.

<sup>3</sup> "Let him use to soften his spirit with frequent meditation upon sad and dolorous objects, as of death, the terrors of the day of judgment, fearful judgments upon sinners, strange horrid accidents, fear of God's wrath, the pains of hell, the unspeakable amazements of the damned, the intolerable load of a sad eternity. For whatsoever creates fear, or makes the spirit to dwell in a religious sadness, is apt to entender the spirit, and make it devout and pliant to any post of duty. For a great fear, when it is ill managed, is the parent of superstition; but a discreet and well-guided fear produces religion" (Jer. Taylor, "Holy Living," chap. iv. § 7).

beginning.<sup>1</sup> And until God raises you higher, I counsel you, Philothea, to keep in the low valley which I show you.

## CHAPTER V

*Of the Considerations, the Second Part of Meditation.*

AFTER the action of the imagination, there follows the action of the understanding, which we call meditation. And this is nothing else than one of several considerations made for the purpose of stirring up our affections in God and things divine. And it is in this that meditation differs from study and from other thoughts and considerations which are made not to acquire virtue or the love of God, but for other

<sup>1</sup> The warning is of importance as illustrating the danger of the Mystical School of Meditation, the abuse of which was condemned in the person of Molinos in 1687. "The New Method of Molinos doth so much prevail at Naples that it is believed he hath above 20,000 followers in that city. He hath writ a book which is entitled 'Il Guida Spirituale,' which is a short abstract of the Mystical divinity. The substance of the whole is reduced to this, that in our prayers and other devotions, the best methods are *to retire the mind from all gross images*, and so *to form an act of faith*, and thereby to present ourselves before God, and then to sink into a silence and cessation of new acts, and to let God act upon us, and so to follow His conduct" (Bishop Burnet's Letter from Italy, published in Mr Shorthouse's Pref. to "Golden Thoughts from the Spiritual Guide," 1883). St Francis has in mind the Mystical method of St Teresa, which on her own confession was based on a different principle from that advocated by St Ignatius Loyola:—"God never endowed me with the gift of making reflections, with the understanding, or with that of using the imagination to any good purpose: my imagination is so sluggish, that even if I would think of, or picture to myself, as I used to labour to picture, our Lord's Humanity, I never could do it" ("Vida S. Teresa," iv. 10).

ends and intentions, such as to become learned, to write, or to dispute. When, therefore, you have shut in your mind, as I have said, within the subject you wish to meditate upon, either by the imagination, if the subject is sensible, or by simple contemplation, if the subject is insensible, you will begin to make considerations on it, of which you will see examples ready for use in the meditations which I have given to you.<sup>1</sup> And if your mind finds sufficient taste and light and fruit in one of the considerations, you will stay there without passing on further,<sup>2</sup> acting like the bees who never leave a flower as long as they find honey to gather from it. But if you do not succeed according to your wish in one of the considerations, after having dealt with it and tasted it a little, you will pass on to another. But go gently and simply in this business without being in a hurry about it.

## CHAPTER VI

### *Of the Affections and Resolutions, the Third Part of Meditation.*

**M**EDITATION spreads good motions in the will, or affective part of our soul,<sup>3</sup> such as the love of God and our neighbour, the desire of Paradise and of

<sup>1</sup> Part i. chaps. ix.-xviii.

<sup>2</sup> "If I experience in one point of the meditation the feelings that I wished to stir up within me, I will stay there and rest without troubling to go farther, until my soul is quite satisfied" ("Spir. Ex. of St. Ign.," wk. i. Add. iv.). Cp. also Bruno, Præf. ad Lectorem, "Qui ex hoc, vel illo puncto ceu ferculo non potest, ex alio saltem carpat, quod ad reficiendam, roborandamque mentem valeat."

<sup>3</sup> "I must examine the motions and inspirations, or illuminations and spiritual taste that I have felt, marking well what effects they have wrought in me" (Da Ponte, Intr., chap. viii.).

glory, zeal for the salvation of souls, the imitation of the life of our Lord, compassion, admiration, joy, fear of the displeasure of God, of judgment, and of hell, hatred of sin, trust in the goodness and mercy of God, confusion at the thought of our past evil life. In these affections our spirit ought to open out and expand as much as possible. And if you wish to be helped in this, take in hand the first volume of the "Meditations of Dom Andrea Capiglia,"<sup>1</sup> and look at his preface, for in it he shows the manner in which the affections may be widened; and more fully still, Father Arias<sup>2</sup> in his treatise on prayer.

You must not, however, Philothea, stay too long in these general affections without converting them into special and particular resolutions for your correction and amendment.<sup>3</sup> For instance, the first word which our Lord said on the Cross will shed without doubt a good affection of imitation in your soul, the desire in fact of forgiving your enemies and of loving them.<sup>4</sup> Now I say that this is a small matter unless you add a special resolution of this kind. "Courage! I will not be offended any more with the cross words which such an one, my neighbour or my servant, says of me, nor of such and such contempt which has been shown

<sup>1</sup> Cf. chap. i. note i. p. 87.

<sup>2</sup> The works of Fr. Francis Arias are recommended in a letter of Oct. 13, 1604, to the Abbess of Puy d'Orbe. He wrote a work entitled, "*Thesaurus Inexhaustus Bonorum quæ in Christo habemus per diversos ejus Titulos Virtutumque Testimonia.*"

<sup>3</sup> "I must examine the resolutions that I made in prayer, to see when and how I am to put them in execution" (Intr. to "Med.," chap. viii., Da Ponte).

<sup>4</sup> "Quemadmodum Christus tanta caritate pro inimicis deprecatus est: sic et nos promptos esse convenit ad veniam omnibus injuriis dandam, et orare pro persequentibus et male de nobis loquentibus" (Bruno., "Med. de 1mo. Verbo").

to me by this person or that; on the contrary, I will say and do such things as will win him and soften him." So also I will act with regard to other trials. By this means, Philothea, you will correct your faults in a short time, whereas by the affections alone you will do it slowly and with difficulty.

## CHAPTER VII

### *Of the Conclusion and the Spiritual Nosegay.*

LASTLY, we must conclude the meditation by three acts, which we must make with the greatest humility possible. The first is the act of thanksgiving,<sup>1</sup> thanking God for the affections and resolutions He has given to us, and for His goodness and mercy which we have found in the mystery of the meditation. The second is the act of oblation,<sup>2</sup> by which we offer to God this same goodness and mercy, the death, the blood, the virtues of His Son, and conjointly with them our affections and resolutions. The third act is that of supplication, by which we ask of God and beseech Him to communicate to us the graces and virtues of His Son, and to give His blessing to our affections and resolutions that we may be able to carry them out faithfully. Then we pray in like

<sup>1</sup> "If it has been happy, I will *give thanks* for it to God, our Lord, and will conduct myself another time in the same manner" (St Ign., "Spir. Ex.," wk. i. Add. v.).

<sup>2</sup> "On the same day I reflected that the Passion of Christ and the compassion of the Blessed Virgin, are as it were two ladders by which to ascend straight to the knowledge of the mysteries of the Ascension and the Assumption, and I felt great devotion in *offering* to our Lord that little amount of knowledge that I possessed of earthly things, as well as of heavenly things" ("Spiritual Diary of Blessed Peter Favre, S.J.," ann. 1542).

manner for the Church, for our pastors, relations, friends, and others, employing for this the intercession of Our Lady, of the angels, of the saints. Lastly, I have noted that it is necessary to say the Pater Noster and Ave Maria, which is the general and necessary prayer of all the faithful.<sup>1</sup>

To all this, I have added that it is needful to gather a little nosegay of devotion.<sup>2</sup> And this is what I wish to say. Those who have walked in a beautiful garden do not leave it willingly without taking in their hand four or five flowers that they may smell them and hold them on their way. So when our mind has thought over some mystery by meditation, we ought to choose one or two or three points which we have found most to our taste, and most fitting for our progress, that we may think over them during the rest of the day, and smell them spiritually. Now this is done in the very place in which we have made our meditation, while thinking over it and walking alone some little time after.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> "Confirm by new acts the resolution you have made to suffer everything with joy; then raising your spirit to heaven, render to the Father of mercies a thousand acts of thanksgiving, that He has been pleased to send His only Son into the world, that He should suffer such horrible torments, and that He should intercede for you. Pray Him to give you the virtue of patience by the merit and intercession of the Son, whom He loves as Himself" ("Spiritual Combat," chap. xlv.).

<sup>2</sup> Cf. part i. chap. ix. ad fin.

<sup>3</sup> "The exercise finished, either sitting or walking, I will examine for a quarter of an hour what has been its success" (St Ign., "Spir. Ex.," wk. i. Add. iv.).

## CHAPTER VIII

*Some Most Useful Counsels on the Subject of Meditation.*

YOU must, above all, Philothea, when you leave your meditation, retain the resolutions and deliberations which you have taken that you may practise them carefully the same day. This is the chief fruit of meditation, without which it is indeed often not only useless but harmful. For virtues meditated upon and not practised sometimes puff up the spirit and the heart, since we think ourselves to be such as we have resolved and determined to be. This is without doubt true, if the resolutions are living and strong. They are, however, not so, but vain and dangerous, if they are not put into practice. It is necessary therefore by all means to try and practise them, and to seek opportunities, whether small or great, to do so. For instance, if I have resolved to gain by gentleness the hearts of those who are an offence to me, I shall seek this very day to meet them that I may greet them in a friendly manner; and if I cannot meet them at least I shall try to speak well of them, and pray God on their behalf.

In leaving this mental prayer, you must take care not to give any shock to your heart, lest you shed the balm which you have received by means of prayer. I mean that you must keep silent a little, if possible, and move your heart quite gently from prayer to business, retaining as long as you possibly can the feeling and the affections which you have conceived. A man who has received in a jar of beautiful porcelain some wine of great value to carry home with him will go gently and will never look aside. Sometimes he will look before him for fear of stumbling over a stone or

making a false step, sometimes at the vase, to see that it does not overflow. You ought to do the same when you leave your meditation. Do not be distracted all at once, but look simply before you; that is to say, if you must meet some one whom you are obliged to entertain or to listen to, you cannot help it, you must accommodate yourself to it, but in such a way that you may look also to your heart, that the wine of holy prayer may overflow as little as possible.

You must accustom yourself likewise to know how to pass from prayer to actions of any kind which your vocation and profession justly and lawfully require of you, though they may seem far removed from the affections you have received in prayer. I mean that a barrister ought to know how to pass from prayer to pleading, a merchant to his business, a married woman to the duty of her married life and the bustle of her household, with all gentleness and quietness, that the spirit be in no way troubled in it. For since both are according to the will of God, the passage from the one to the other must be in a spirit of humility and devotion.<sup>1</sup>

It will sometimes happen that immediately after the preparation, your affection will be found altogether stirred up to serve God. Then, Philothea, you must

<sup>1</sup> "A soul which has attached itself to the exercises of meditation, interrupt it, and you will see it come forth with sadness, worried and astonished. A soul which has true liberty will come forth with a bright face and a gracious heart in view of the interruption which has disturbed it. For it is all one to it, whether to serve God by meditating, or to serve Him in helping its neighbour; the one and the other are the will of God; but the help of our neighbours is necessary at this time" (Letter to Madame de Chantal, Oct. 14, 1604).

loosen the rein without following the method which I have given you; for although, as a rule, the consideration should precede the affections and resolutions, yet when the Holy Spirit gives you the affections with the consideration, you ought not to seek for the consideration, since it is only made to stir up the affection. In short, whenever the affections present themselves to you, you must receive them and give them place, whether they come before or after all the considerations. And although I have placed the affections after all the considerations, I have only done it the better to distinguish the parts of prayer. Moreover, it is a general rule never to restrain the affections, but to let them have free course when they present themselves.<sup>1</sup> And I say this not only of the other affections, but also of the acts of thanksgiving, oblation, and prayer which may be rendered amidst the considerations; for they must not be restrained any more than the other affections, although afterwards at the conclusion of the meditation they should be repeated and renewed. But as regards the resolutions, they must be made after the affections, and at the end of the whole meditation, before the conclusion, inasmuch as, since they have to represent to us particular and familiar objects, they would, if we made them amidst the affections, put us in danger of entering into distractions.

Amid the affections and resolutions, it is good to

<sup>1</sup> "So likewise beginners, proficient, and those that are perfect, upon whatsoever they meditate, may draw forth those affections and purposes that are fitting to their state and necessity. Hence it is, that although by the ordinary law we are to observe the order propounded, yet need we not be so bound that it shall not be lawful to change it" (Da Ponte, "Intr. to Med.," chap. iv.).

make use of colloquy,<sup>1</sup> and to speak sometimes to our Lord, sometimes to the angels, and to persons represented in the mysteries, to the saints, and to ourself, to our heart, to sinners, and even to creatures without sense, as we see that David did in the Psalms,<sup>2</sup> and that other saints did in their meditations and prayers.

## CHAPTER IX

### *Of the Dryness which comes in Meditation.*

IF it should happen, Philothea, that you have no taste or consolation in meditation, I implore you not to trouble about it; but open the door sometimes to vocal prayer,<sup>3</sup> pour out your grief to our Lord, confess your unworthiness, pray Him to help you, kiss His image if you have it, address to Him the words of Jacob: "I will not let Thee go, O Lord,

<sup>1</sup> "Colloquy, properly speaking, is the intercourse of friend with friend, or of a slave with his master" (St. Ign., "Spir. Ex.," wk. i. Ex. i). They are interspersed throughout the "Meditations of Da Ponte."

"In your retirement make *frequent colloquies* or short discourses between God and thy own soul (Jeremy Taylor, "Holy Living," chap. i. § 3). In Sutton's "Meditation on the Most Holy Sacrament," they are called Soliloquies.

<sup>2</sup> Ps. xxxvii., "Domine, ne in furore" (Ps. xxxviii.). Ps. xlii., "Judica me, Deus" (Ps. xliii.). Ps. xlvi., "Omnes gentes, plaudite" (Ps. xlvii.). Ps. cii., "Benedic anima mea" (Ps. ciii.). Ps. cxlviii. 2, "Laudate eum omnes Angeli ejus." 3, "Laudate eum sol et luna." 7, 8, "Laudate Dominum de terra, dracones et omnes abyssi, ignis, grando, nix, glacies, spiritus procellarum" (Ps. cxlviii.).

<sup>3</sup> "Mental prayer is wont sometimes to break out into vocal, speaking to our Lord exterior words arising from the interior fervour and devotion; and vocal prayer is used to quicken the soul, to make it more attentive to mental. For when, being in it, we perceive ourselves to be distracted

except Thou bless me";<sup>1</sup> or those of the woman of Canaan: "Truth, Lord, I am a dog; yet the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from their master's table."<sup>2</sup>

At other times take up a book and read it with attention, until your spirit is awakened and restored within you.<sup>3</sup> Stir up your heart sometimes by some gesture and movement of external devotion, prostrating yourself, crossing your hands on your breast, embracing a crucifix; that is, if you are in some place alone.<sup>4</sup> And if, after all this, you have no consolation, however great be your dryness, do not trouble about it, but continue to hold yourself in a devout attitude before God. How many courtiers there are who go a hundred times a year into the presence-chamber of the Prince without hope of speaking with him, and only to be seen of him, and to pay their respects! So

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and dry, it is a good remedy to speak some words that may awaken and re-collect us" (Da Ponte, *Intr. to "Med.,"* chap. vii.).

"Possibly we may be pleased to recite a hymn when a collect seems flat to us and unpleasant, and . . . break your office and devotion into fragments, and make frequent returnings by ejaculations and abrupt entercourses with God; for so, no length can oppress your tenderness and sickness of spirit" (Jeremy Taylor, "*Holy Living*," chap. iv. § 7).

<sup>1</sup> Gen. xxxii. 26, "Non dimittam te, nisi benedixeris mihi."

<sup>2</sup> St Matt. xv. 27, "Etiam, Domine: nam et catelli edunt de micis, quæ cadunt de mensa dominorum suorum."

<sup>3</sup> "Servez-vous du livre quand vous verrez votre esprit las: c'est-à-dire, lisez un petit, et puis méditez, et puis relisez encore un petit, et puis méditez jusqu'à la fin de votre demi-heure. La mère Thérèse en usa ainsi du commencement" (Letter, Oct. 1604).

<sup>4</sup> "Let your posture and gesture of bodie in praier bee reverent, grave, and humble, according to publick order, or the best examples, if it be in publick: if it be in private, either stand, or kneel, or lie flat upon the ground on your

ought we to come, my dear Philothea, to holy prayer, purely and simply to pay our respects and to bear witness to our faithfulness. And if it should be pleasing to the divine Majesty to speak to us, and to hold converse with us by His holy inspirations and interior consolations, this will doubtless be a great honour and a most delightful pleasure; but if it does not please Him to give us this grace, and He leaves us there without speaking to us, as if indeed He did not see us, and as if we were not in His presence, yet we ought not to leave it. On the contrary, we ought to rest there before His sovereign goodness, in a devout and peaceful attitude; and then infallibly He will accept our patience, and will note our application and perseverance; so that another time when we return to His presence, He will show us His favour, and will converse with us by His consolations, alluring us to see the sweetness of Holy Prayer. But when He does not do so, let us content ourselves, Philothea, with the thought that it is a very great honour to be near Him and in His sight.<sup>1</sup>

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face, in your ordinary and more solemn prayers" (Jeremy Taylor, "Holy Living," chap. iv. § 7).

<sup>1</sup> "Quand quelque sœur se plaignait à notre bienheureux Père de ses désolations intérieures, et de ses aridités en l'exercice de l'oraison, au lieu de la consoler il lui disait: 'Pour moi j'ai toujours plus estimé les confitures sèches que les liquides,' et alléguait ce mot de David: 'In terra deserta, invia, et inaquosa, sic in sancto apparui tibi, ut viderem virtutem tuam, et gloriam tuam' (Ps. lxii. 3; A.V. lxiii.). La manne, ce pain des unges, cette viande céleste dont Israël fut nourri au désert, était un petit pain assez sec" ("L'Esprit du B. Fr. de Sales," part iii. § 51).

## CHAPTER X

*Exercise for the Morning.*

BESIDES this complete and formal mental prayer, and the other vocal prayers which you ought to make once a day, there are five other kinds of prayer which are shorter, and are, as it were, fit sets and shoots of the other great prayer; and, amongst these, the first is that which is made in the morning, as a general preparation for all the works of the day. Now you will do it in this way.

Thank God and adore Him exceedingly for the grace He has given you in preserving you during the past night; and if you have committed any sin during its hours, you will ask pardon of Him.

Consider that the present day has been given to you that in it you may prize the future day of eternity, and you will make a firm resolution to employ the day with this intention.

Think over what affairs, what business, what occasions you may have this day of serving God, and what temptations of offending Him you will fall in with, whether by anger, or by vanity, or by any other excess. And by a holy resolution, prepare yourself to use the means which will offer themselves to you to serve God and to further your devotion. Likewise, on the contrary, determine to avoid, to resist, and to conquer that which may present itself against your salvation and the glory of God. It is not sufficient only to make this resolution, but to prepare the means of putting it into practice. For instance, if I think that I shall have to deal in some matter with a person who is passionate and quick of temper, not only shall I resolve in no way to lose control over myself so as

to offend him, but I shall prepare words of gentleness in anticipation, or the assistance of some one who may be able to control him. If I think that I shall be visiting some sick person, I shall arrange the hour, and the consolation, and the help which I have to give him. And thus in other cases also.

This done, humble yourself before God, recognising that you can do nothing of yourself which you have determined to do, whether to flee evil or to do good. And as if you held your heart in your hands, offer it with all your good intentions to the Divine Majesty, praying Him to take it in His protection, and to strengthen it that it may succeed in His service. And this you may do in inward words such as these: "O Lord, behold this poor and miserable heart, which by Thy goodness has conceived many good affections. But, alas, it is too weak and poor to effect the good which it desires, unless Thou accord to it Thy heavenly benediction. Grant it, I pray Thee, with this intention, O merciful Father, by the merit of the Passion of Thy Son, to whose honour I consecrate this day and the rest of my life." Invoke Our Lady, your good angel, and the saints, that they may be present with you for this purpose.

But all these spiritual actions ought to be performed shortly and quickly, if possible, before you leave your room, that by means of this exercise all that you do during the day may be watered with the blessing of God. I pray you, Philothea, never to fail in it.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> "Le matin, prenez pour coutume de vous mettre en la présence de Dieu, vous préparant à servir Dieu le long du jour, vous offrant à son amour, et lui offrant le vôtre" (Letter to the Abbess of Puy d'Orbe, May 1604).

## CHAPTER XI

*Of the Evening Exercise, and the Examination of Conscience.*

JUST as before your ordinary dinner you will make your spiritual dinner by means of meditation, so before your supper you must make a little supper, at least a devout and spiritual meal. Secure, therefore, some leisure, a little before supper time,<sup>1</sup> and when you have prostrated yourself before God, and have gathered yourself together in the presence of Jesus Christ crucified (whom you will represent to yourself by simple consideration and inward vision), rekindle the fire of the morning's meditation in your heart by some dozen quick aspirations, humiliations, and loving ejaculations, which you will offer up to the divine Saviour of your soul. You may do this either by repeating the points which have given to you the most relish in the meditation of the morning, or in rousing yourself by some new subject, whichever you like best. As to the examination of conscience, which ought always to be made before going to bed, each one knows how it should be done.<sup>2</sup>

We thank God for His preservation of us during the past day.

<sup>1</sup> "Un petit devant le souper, il vous serait fort utile de prendre un demi-quart d'heure de recueillement à remâcher la méditation du matin, sinon qu'à cette heure-là l'on dit complies au monastère" (Letter to Abbess of Puy d'Orbe, Oct. 9, 1604").

<sup>2</sup> "Le soir, environ une heure ou une heure et demie après souper, vous vous retererez, et direz le *Pater noster*, l'*Ave*, le *Credo*; cela fait, le *Confiteor* jusqu'à *mea culpa*; puis l'examen de conscience, après lequel vous acheverez le *mea culpa* et direz les litanies de Notre Dame de l'église de Lorette" (Letter to Madame de Chantal, Oct. 14, 1604).

We consider how we have behaved during all the hours of the day, and to do this the more easily, we will recall where, with whom, and in what occupation we have been engaged.

If we find that we have done some good, we will give thanks to God for it ; if, on the contrary, we have done some evil, in thought, in word, or in deed, we will ask pardon of His divine Majesty, with a resolution to confess it at the first opportunity, and to make amends for it carefully.

After that, we commend to the divine providence our body, our soul, the Church, our relations, our friends. We pray Our Lady, the good angel, and the saints to watch over us and for us ;<sup>1</sup> and with the blessing of God we take the rest which according to His will is needful for us.

This exercise ought never to be forgotten, any more than that of the morning. By the morning exercise you open the windows of your soul to the Sun of righteousness, and by that of the evening you shut them against the darkness of hell.

## CHAPTER XII

### *Of the Spiritual Retreat.*

[T is here, dear Philothea, that I desire you most affectionately to follow my counsel, for in this point consists one of the most assured means of your spiritual progress.

<sup>1</sup> The old English night-rhymes are still remembered, if not still used, in some parts of the Midlands :—

“ Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John,  
Bless the bed that I lie on !  
There are four corners to my bed,  
There are four angels round my head,  
One to watch, and one to pray,  
And two to carry my soul away.”

Recall your spirit into the presence of God as often as you can during the day by one of the four means which I have explained to you. Consider what God does, and what you do. You will see His eyes turned towards you, and perpetually fixed upon you with an incomparable love. "O God," you will say, "why do I not always look at Thee, as Thou always lookest at me? Why dost Thou think so often of me, O my Lord, and why do I think so seldom of Thee? Where are we, O my soul? Our true place is God, and yet where are we?"

As the birds have nests on the trees that they may have a retreat when they need it, and the stags have their thickets and their holds in which they retire and get into cover, seeking the cool of the shadow in summer—so, Philothea, our hearts ought to seek out and choose some place each day, either on the mount of Calvary, or in the wounds of our Lord, or in some other place near to Him, that they may make their retreat on all occasions, and there disburden and renew themselves amid external duties, and also that they may be there as in a stronghold to defend themselves from temptations. Happy will be the soul which can say in trust to our Lord: "Thou art my house of defence and my stronghold,<sup>1</sup> my shelter from the rain, and my shadow from the heat."<sup>2</sup>

Remember, then, Philothea, to make several retreats in the solitude of your heart while bodily you are in the midst of the intercourse and business of life. And this mental solitude can in no way be hindered by the multitude of those who are about you, for they

<sup>1</sup> Ps. lxx. 3, "Quoniam firmamentum meum, et refugium meum et tu" (Ps. lxxi., A.V.).

<sup>2</sup> Ps. xxv. 4, "Spes a turbine, umbraculum ab aestu"

are not about your soul but about your body, if your heart rests by itself apart in the presence of God alone. It is the exercise which King David made amid the many occupations which he had, as he witnesses in a thousand points in his Psalms; as when he says: "O Lord, I am alway by Thee;<sup>1</sup> I see my God always before me;<sup>2</sup> unto Thee lift I up mine eyes, O Thou my God, who dwellest in the heavens;<sup>3</sup> mine eyes are ever looking unto the Lord."<sup>4</sup>

And, indeed, our engagements are not ordinarily so serious as to prevent our withdrawing the heart from them from time to time to replace it in this divine solitude.

The father and mother of St Catherine of Siena<sup>5</sup> having deprived her of every opportunity of place and leisure for prayer and meditation, our Lord inspired her to make a little inward oratory in her spirit, within which, when she retired in thought, she was able, amid her external duties, to apply herself to this holy solitude of the heart. And afterwards, when the world attacked her, she suffered no inconvenience from it; because, said she, she shut herself within her inner chamber, where she consoled herself with her heavenly Bridegroom. Thus henceforth she gave counsel to

<sup>1</sup> Ps. lxxii. 23, "Ego semper tecum" (Ps. lxxiii., A.V.).

<sup>2</sup> Ps. xv. 8, "Providebam Dominum in conspectu meo semper" (Ps. xvi., A.V.).

<sup>3</sup> Ps. cxxii. 1, "Ad te levavi oculos meos qui habitas in cælis" (Ps. cxxiii., A.V.).

<sup>4</sup> Ps. xxiv. 15, "Oculi mei semper ad Dominum" (Ps. xxv., A.V.).

<sup>5</sup> "Dalle vite de' Padri del deserto prendendo amore alla solitudine, s'avviò con un pane soletta fuor di città, in un segreto luogo formato a spelonca: di dove Dio, certamente per opera de' genitori, la tolse" (Intr. to "Lettere di S. Caterina da Siena," di Niccolo Tommaseo, i. 5).

her spiritual children to make for themselves a chamber in the heart, and to dwell therein.<sup>1</sup>

Withdraw, therefore, your spirit sometimes within your heart, where, separate from all men, you may be able from your soul to hold intercourse heart to heart with God, to say with David, "I have watched, and am become like a pelican in the wilderness: I am even like a screech-owl or an owl that is in the desert, and, as it were, a sparrow that sitteth alone upon the house top."<sup>2</sup> And these words, besides their literal sense (which bears witness that the great king spent some hours alone in the contemplation of spiritual things), show us in their mystical sense three excellent retreats, and, as it were, three hermitages, in which we can practise solitude in imitation of our Saviour. On Mount Calvary He was like the Pelican in the wilderness, who with his blood revives his young when they are dead. In His birth in a desert

<sup>1</sup> "L'anima rinunzia alla conversazione delle creature, perchè vede che spesse volte ci sono mezzo tra noi e il Creatore nostro; e fugge alla cella attuale e mentale. A questo t' invito te, e le altre: e ti comando, diletissima figliuola mia, che tu sempre stia nella casa del cognoscimento di te, ove noi troviamo il cibo angelico dell' affocato desiderio di Dio inverso di noi" (Lettera a Suora Eugenia sua nipote nel Monast. di Sta Agnese di Montepulciano; Lettere, edit. Tommaseo, i. 97).

"And this was long since by a spiritual person called *a building to God, a Chappell in our heart*. It reconciles Martha's employment with Mary's devotion; charity and religion; the necessities of our calling and the employments of devotion. For thus in the midst of the works of your trade, you may retire into your chappell (your heart), and converse with God by frequent addresses and returns" (Jeremy Taylor, chap. i. § 3).

<sup>2</sup> Ps. ci. 7, 8, "Similis factus sum pellicano solitudinis; factus sum sicut nycticorax in domicilio. Vigilavi, et factus sum sicut passer solitarius in tecto" (Ps. cii., A. V.).

stable, He was like the owl in the wilderness, lamenting and weeping over our faults and sins. And on the day of His Ascension He was like the sparrow, withdrawing and flying into heaven, which is, as it were, the roof of the world.<sup>1</sup> And in all these three places we can make our retreat amid the bustle of business. When the Blessed Elzear, Count of Arian in Provence, had been for a long while absent from his devoted and chaste Delphine, she sent to him a messenger to inquire about his health. He sent word back: "I am very well, my dear wife; and if you wish to see me, search for me in the wound on the side of our sweet Jesus, for it is there that I dwell, and there where you will find me. Elsewhere you will search for me in vain."<sup>2</sup> He indeed was a Christian knight.

<sup>1</sup> "Dicuntur hæ aves (pelicani) tanquam colaphis rostrorum occidere parvulos suos, eosdemque in nido occisos a se lugere per triduum: postremo dicunt matrem seipsam graviter vulnerare et sanguinem suum super filios fundere, quo illi superfusi reviviscunt. Fortasse hoc verum, fortasse falsum sit: tamen si verum est, quemadmodum illi congruat, qui nos vivificavit sanguine suo, videte." . . . "Puto ego hic intelligi Christum natum de virgine. Solus enim sic, ideo solitudo: in solitudine natus, quia solus ita natus. Post nativitatem ventum est ad passionem . . . ergo tanquam in nocte ignorantiae ipsorum, et tanquam in parietinis ruinæ ipsorum. Ecce nycticorax et in parietinis." . . . "Ascendit in cælum factus est sicut passer volando, id est, ascendendo: singularis in tecto, id est in cælo" (St Aug. in Ps. ci.; Enarr. Sermon. i., tom. iv. 1096-97).

<sup>2</sup> St Eleazarus, Ariani comes., *ob.* 1323. "Qui una cum uxore B. Delphina raro exemplo, licet eodem cum ipsa thoro uteretur, virginitatem tamen coluit. Cui aliquando de nimia apud Montem Pessulanum mora expostulanti hæc per literas respondit: Sanus corpore sum et sospes: si vero me videre cupis, quære me in vulnere lateris Christi: illic enim habito, et ibi me poteris invenire, frustra alibi quæsitura." He was appointed præceptor to Charles, Duke of

## CHAPTER XIII

*Of Aspirations, Ejaculatory Prayers, and Good Thoughts.*

WE retire to God, because we aspire to Him, and we aspire to Him that we may retire to Him, so that the Godward aspiration and the spiritual retreat support one another, and both of them proceed from and are born of good thoughts.

Aspire then frequently to God, Philothea, by short but glowing outbursts of your heart,<sup>1</sup> wonder at His beauty, invoke His aid, cast yourself in spirit at the foot of the Cross, adore His goodness, ask Him frequently about your salvation, give Him your soul a thousand times in the day, fix your inward eyes on His sweetness, stretch forth your hand to Him, as a little child does to his father, that He may lead you. Place Him on your breast, as a delightful nosegay. Set Him up in your soul as a standard, and make a thousand kinds of different movements of your heart, such as will give you the love of God, and stir you up to a passionate and tender delight in this divine Bridegroom.

Thus do we make these ejaculatory prayers, which the great St Augustine counsels so carefully to the devout lady Proba.<sup>2</sup> Philothea, when our spirit

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Calabria, by Robert, King of Sicily" (Ann. Eccles. Oder. Rayn., tom. xv., ann. 1323).

<sup>1</sup> "Break your office and devotion into fragments, and make frequent returnings by ejaculations and abrupt enter-courses with God" (Jeremy Taylor, "Holy Living," chap. iv. § 7).

<sup>2</sup> "Dicuntur fratres in Ægypto crebras quidem habere orationes, sed eas tamen brevissimas, et raptim quodam modo jaculatas" (St. Aug. ad Probam, Ep. cxxx., § 20 it, ii.).

devotes itself to the company, the privacy, and the familiarity of its God, it will be perfumed with His perfections. And such an exercise as this is not difficult. It can intertwine itself in all our business and occupations, without in any way interfering with them, inasmuch as whether in spiritual retreat, or in these outbursts of the soul, we need only make but little and short pauses in our work which in no way hinder us, but help us considerably in the pursuit of that which we are doing. The pilgrim who takes a little wine to rejoice his heart and refresh his mouth, though he stay a while, yet in doing so does not interrupt his journey but receives strength so as to accomplish it the more quickly and easily, since he only rests that he may go on the better. Many have gathered together verbal aspirations which indeed are very useful, but in my opinion you will not aim at any kind of words, but will pronounce either from the heart or the mouth those which love will suggest at the time, for it will furnish you with what you wish. It is true that there are certain words which have special force to content the heart on these occasions, such as the ejaculations sown so thickly within the Psalms of David,<sup>1</sup> the different invocations of the name of Jesus,<sup>2</sup> and the marks of love which are

<sup>1</sup> A collection of ejaculatory prayers gathered from the Psalms was made by St Francis during the time of his temptation to despair when he was at the College of Clermont at Paris as a student. It begins, "Hath God forgotten to be gracious, and will He shut up His loving kindness in displeasure?" and ends, "In Thee, O Lord, have I put my trust; let me never be put to confusion" (Migne, vol. v. pp. 261-66).

<sup>2</sup> The Litany of the Holy Name of Jesus is included in "Hymns and Prayers for those who have the devotion to recite them before or after the Holy Communion" (Migne, vol. iii. pp. 1439-44).

stamped on the Song of Songs.<sup>1</sup> The spiritual songs serve also to the same end, provided that they are sung with attention.<sup>2</sup>

Indeed, as those who are in love with a love which is human and rational, have their thoughts nearly always turned towards the thing that is loved, their heart full of affection for it, their mouth full of its praises, and who in its absence lose no opportunity of bearing witness to their passion by talk, and find no tree on the bark of which they do not write the name of that which they love; <sup>3</sup> so those who love God cannot cease from thinking of Him, from wishing for Him, from aspiring to Him, from speaking of Him, and would, if it were possible, engrave on the breast of all persons in the world the holy and sacred name of Jesus.

And to this, indeed, all things invite them; and there is not a creature which does not announce to them the praise of their well beloved. And as St Augustine says,<sup>4</sup> after St Anthony, all that is in the world speaks to them in dumb but quite intelligible language, in favour of their love; all things provoke

<sup>1</sup> Cp. "Declaration Mystique sur la Cantique des Cantiques," by St Francis of Sales; Migne, vol. iii. pp. 1231-66.

<sup>2</sup> The Hymns of St Thomas Aquinas, "Pange lingua," "Lauda Sion," and "Adore te devote," are suggested for use in the Hymns and Prayers for Holy Communion (Migne, vol. iii. pp. 1431-56).

<sup>3</sup> "O Rosalind! these trees shall be my books,  
And in their barks my thoughts I'll character;  
That every eye, which in this forest looks,  
Shall see thy virtue witnessed everywhere."  
—"As You Like It," Act iii.

<sup>4</sup> "Omnium pulchritudo quodam modo vox eorum est confitentium Deum. Clamat cælum Deo, Tu me fecisti, non ego. Clamat terra, Tu me condidisti, non ego" (St Aug., En. in Ps. cxlviii. 15, t. iv.).

them to good thoughts, from which afterwards proceed power, outbursts, and aspirations after God. Here are some examples:—St Gregory, Bishop of Nazianzos, as he himself told his people,<sup>1</sup> while he was walking along the seashore, used to notice how the waves broke on the beach and left behind them stones and shells, pieces of seaweed, oysters, and such drift as the sea threw up, and as it may be said spat out on the shore, and then as the waves retired it drew back and engulfed anew a part of the drift, whilst the rocks in the neighbourhood remained firm and immovable, notwithstanding that the waters came and beat rudely against them. Now from this there comes the beautiful thought, that the weak, like the shells, the cowries, and pieces of seaweed, allow themselves to be swept away sometimes by affliction, sometimes by consolation, at the mercy of the waves and billows of fortune; but the brave dwell firm and immovable in every kind of storm.<sup>2</sup> From this thought are born these outbursts of David: “O Lord, save me, for the waters are come in even unto my soul.” “O Lord, deliver me from the deep waters; I am come into the deep of the sea, and the tempest has overwhelmed me.”<sup>3</sup> For St Gregory

<sup>1</sup> “Inambulabam ego solus, vergente jam in occasum Sole. Locus porro in quo spatiabar, maris ripa erat. . . Hic et lapilli et Algæ, et Buccinæ et levissima ostrea extrudebantur; et quasi expuebantur, nonnulla etiam reciprocante fluctu rursus arripiebantur, petris interim non minus immotis et inconcussis remanentibus quam si nulla omnino vis ipsis admoveretur” (St Greg. Naz., Orat. xxviii.).

<sup>2</sup> “Alii autem petræ instar esse, ac petra illa, supra quam stamus, et quam colimus, digni quicunque nimirum philosophica ratione utuntur” (St Greg. Naz., Orat. xxviii.).

<sup>3</sup> Ps. lxviii. 2, “Salvum me fac, Deus; quoniam intraverunt aquæ usque ad animam meam.” 15. “Libera me de profundis aquarum.” 3. “Veni in altitudinem maris, et

was at that time in trouble because of the unhappy usurpation of his bishopric, which Maximus had attempted.<sup>1</sup>

St Fulgentius, Bishop of Ruspe, when he was in a general assembly of the Roman nobility, which Theodoric, the King of the Goths, was addressing, seeing the splendour of so many lords standing in rank, each one according to his quality: "O God," he said, "how beautiful must be the heavenly Jerusalem, since here below the earthly Rome appears so full of pomp! And if in this world so much splendour is allowed to the lovers of vanity, what glory must be reserved in the other world for those who contemplate truth!"<sup>2</sup>

It is said that St Anselm, Archbishop of Canterbury (whose birth has so nobly honoured our mountains<sup>3</sup>), was wonderful in his practice of good thoughts. A hare pressed by the dogs ran under the horse of this holy prelate as to a refuge which the

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*tempestas demersit me*" (Ps. lxix., A.V.). Quoted from St Gregory Nazianzen.

<sup>1</sup> The oration was delivered when he had returned from the country into the city after the troubles he had suffered from Maximus. Maximus was a Cynic philosopher of Alexandria, who from motives of gain came to Constantinople in 379, at the same time that St Gregory had begun to build up the Catholic faith. The simple goodness of St Gregory was imposed upon by the Cynic. Maximus was surreptitiously made bishop by some of his own countrymen, but was immediately driven out of the city (Ann. Eccles. Bar., ann. 379; W. Bright, "Hist. of the Church," p. 166).

<sup>2</sup> St Fulgentius, Bishop of Ruspe in Africa, visited Rome in 500. "*Quam speciosa potest esse Hierusalem cælestis, si sic fulget Roma terrestris! Et si in hoc sæculo datur tanti honoris dignitas diligentibus vanitatem, qualis honor et gloria præstabitur Sanctis contemplantibus veritatem!*" (Annal. Eccl. Bar., ann. 500).

<sup>3</sup> St Anselm, Abp. of Cant., 1093-1109. He was born at Aosta.

imminent peril of death pointed out to it; the dogs barking all around did not dare to violate the immunity to which their prey had had recourse. It was a spectacle so extraordinary that it caused the whole hunt to laugh, whilst the great Anslem, weeping and groaning, said: "Ah, you laugh, but the poor beast does not laugh. The enemies of the soul, when it is pursued and misled by many turns into all kinds of sin, await the narrow paths of death to ravish and devour it; and the soul, frightened, searches everywhere help and refuge. And if it find them not, its enemies mock at it and laugh over it." Having said this, he went away sighing.<sup>1</sup>

Constantine the Great wrote so respectfully to St Anthony that the religious who were about him were much astonished, and he said to them, Why do you wonder that a king should write to a man? Wonder rather that God Eternal has written His law to mortals, indeed, has spoken to them mouth to mouth in the Person of His Son.<sup>2</sup>

St Francis,<sup>3</sup> when he saw a sheep all alone amid a flock of goats, said: "Look what company he is in! How gentle is this poor little sheep among these

<sup>1</sup> "Ridetis; at huic infelici nullus risus, nulla lætitia, hostes ejus circa eam sunt, et ipsa sola de vita sollicita confugit ad nos, præsidium suo modo flagitans. Hoc plane est similitudo hominis et animæ merientis" (Eadmer, Lib. de St Ans. Similitudinibus, c. 189).

<sup>2</sup> "Reges sæculi ad nos miserunt epistolas. Quæ hic Christianis adhibenda admiratio est? licet enim diversa sit dignitas, attamen eadem nascendi et moriendi conditio est. Illa sunt omni veneratione percolenda, illa toto animi affectu retinenda sunt, quod hominibus Deus legem scripserit, quod per Filium suum propriis Ecclesiis ditavit eloquiis" (St Athan. in Vit. Anton; Annal. Eccles Bar., ann. 328).

<sup>3</sup> "Heu! frater agnicule, animal innocens, Christum hominibus repræsentans" (St Bonaventura, "Legend. St Franc. Ass.," c. viii.).

goats! Our Lord went thus gently and humbly amongst the Pharisees!" And at another time, seeing a little lamb being eaten by a pig: "Alas! little lamb," he said, weeping, "how vividly dost thou represent the death of my Saviour!"

That great personage of our time, Francis Borgia,<sup>1</sup> then still Duke of Gandia, when he was going to the chase, used to make a thousand devout observations. "I wonder," he said afterwards, "that the hawks return to the wrist, and allow their eyes to be covered and themselves to be fastened to their perch, and yet that men show themselves so untractable to the voice of God.

The great St Basil said that the rose among the thorns makes this remonstrance to man. "That which is most agreeable in this world, O mortals, is mixed

<sup>1</sup> Don Francisco de Borgia, fourth Duke of Gandia, and afterwards third General of the Company of Jesus, was born in 1510. The death of the Empress Isabel, wife of Charles V., in 1539, was a turning-point in his life. He was soon after appointed Viceroy of Catalonia. In 1542 he made the acquaintance of the Blessed Peter Favre, the first companion of St Ignatius Loyola. In 1546, on a second visit of Father Favre, he laid the foundations of a college of the Society at Gandia, and made the spiritual exercises under the direction of Father Favre. He then resolved to enter the Society, and brought the exercises before the notice of Pope Paul III., who approved of them in his Brief of 1548. He succeeded Father Laynez as General in the year 1565. As a young man he was skilled in hawking: "*Car il dressoit fort bien un Lanier pour voler sur terre, et un Sacre mué, pour le vol hault, ou un Gerfault. . . Aussi disoit il depuis que nostre Seigneur lui avoit fait aux champs de grandes faveurs et graces, et donné en la vollerie de merveilleuse considerations. Il consideroit qu'un oiseau lui revient sur le poing, le sert et lui donne plaisir, bien que l'homme le lie et le prenne, et qu'avec le chapperon il lui oste la veue. . . . Il pleuroit la desobeissance et rebellion de l'homme*" ("Vie de P. Fr. de Borgia," by Fr. P. de Ribadeneyra, Fr. Ed., 1613; liv. i. chap. iii).

with sadness; nothing in it is pure; regret is always glued to mirth, widowhood to marriage, care to fertility, ignominy to glory, expense to honours, disgust to delight, and sickness to health." "The rose indeed is a beautiful flower," says this holy person, "but it gives me great sadness, telling me of my sin, through which the earth has been condemned to bear thorns." <sup>1</sup>

A devout soul, looking down into a stream in a still night, said: "O my God, these same stars will be under my feet, when Thou hast given me my lodging in Thy holy tabernacle; and as the stars of heaven are represented in the earth, so the men of the earth are represented in heaven in the living fountain of divine charity."

Another, seeing a river flowing, wrote thus: "My soul will never find rest till it is engulfed within the sea of the divinity which is its source."

And St Francisca,<sup>2</sup> watching a pleasant stream on the bank of which she had been kneeling in prayer, was ravished in ecstasy, repeating several times these words quite softly: "The grace of my God flows as sweetly and smoothly as this little stream."

Another, seeing the trees in blossom, replied: "Why am I alone without blossom in the garden of the Church!" Another, seeing the little chickens gathered under their mother,<sup>3</sup> said: "O Lord, keep us under

<sup>1</sup> "Florida rosa est, at mœsto me animo facit. Quoties cumque enim florem conspicio, in mei memoriam peccati redeo, cujus reatu indictum terræ, ut mihi spinas ac tribulos germinet" (Ps. Basil. De Hom. Struct., Orat. iii. 4, t. i., App.).

<sup>2</sup> St Francisca Romana, *ob.* 1436: a Roman widow. She was canonised by Pope Paul V. in 1608, Mar. 9. Her life by her Confessor, Joh. Matiotti, is largely made up of these beautiful similes.

<sup>3</sup> Ps. xvi. 8, "Sub umbra alarum tuarum protege me" (Ps. xvii., A.V.).

the shadow of Thy wings." Another, seeing a sunflower,<sup>1</sup> said: "When will it come to pass, my God, that my soul will follow the attraction of Thy goodness?" And looking at the pansies in the garden, beautiful to the sight, but without scent:<sup>2</sup> "Alas," said he, "such are my thoughts, beautiful in expression, but without either result or fruit."

Behold, then, dear Philothea, how we may draw good thoughts and holy aspirations from that which presents itself to us amid the changes of this mortal life. Unhappy are those who turn aside the creatures from their Creator to turn them towards sin! Blessed are they who turn the creatures to the glory of their Creator, and employ their vanity in honour of truth! "Indeed," says St Gregory Nazianzen, "I am accustomed to apply all things to my spiritual profit."<sup>3</sup> Read the devout epitaph which St Jerome has made on the holy Paula:<sup>4</sup> It is a good thing to see how it is altogether strewn with the aspirations and sacred observations which she made on all occasions.

Now, in this exercise of spiritual retreat and ejaculatory prayer lies the great work of devotion. It can supply the defect of all other prayer, but the lack of it can scarcely be made good by any other means.

<sup>1</sup> "Tourne-soleil": of their habit of turning with the sun, Gerarde says: "The which I could never observe, although I have endeavoured to finde out the truth of it" (Herbal, 1597).

<sup>2</sup> "Flowers of three sundrie colours, by reason of the beautie and braverie of which colours, they are very pleasing to the eie; for smell they have little, or none at all" (Gerarde, p. 703).

<sup>3</sup> "Omnia ad me ipsum referre et divigere soleo" (St Greg. Naz., Orat. xxviii.).

<sup>4</sup> Ep. lxxxvi., "ad Eustachium Virginem, Epitaphiam Paulæ matris" (St Jer., tom. iv., ann. 404).

Without it we cannot well practise the contemplative life, and could only practise the active life badly. Without it, repose is only sloth and work embarrassment. It is for this reason I adjure you to embrace it with all your heart, without ever departing from it.

## CHAPTER XIV

*Of the Most Holy Mass, and how to hear it.*

I HAVE not yet spoken to you at all of the Sun of spiritual exercises, the most holy, sacred, and all sovereign Sacrifice and Sacrament of the Mass, the centre of the Christian Religion, the heart of devotion, the seal of piety, an ineffable mystery which includes within itself the abyss of divine charity, and by which God, by applying Himself really to us, communicates to us of His greatness, His graces, and His favour.

Prayer offered in union with this divine Sacrifice has an unspeakable force, so that, Philothea, the soul abounds by it in heavenly favours, resting, as it were, upon its Well-beloved, who makes it so full of odours and spiritual sweetness that it resembles a column of smoke from aromatic wood, myrrh, incense, and the scents of the perfumer, as it is said in the Canticles.<sup>1</sup>

Make, therefore, every effort to be present daily at the holy Mass,<sup>2</sup> that you may offer with the Priest the

<sup>1</sup> Cant. iii. 16: "Quæ est ista, quæ ascendit per Desertum, sicut virgula fumi ex aromatibus myrrhæ et thuris, et universi pulveris pigmentarii."

<sup>2</sup> "Oyez tous les jour la Messe, quand il se pourra, en la façon que j'ai décrite en l'écrit de la méditation" (Letter to Madame de Chantal, Oct. 14, 1604). The "Exercice de la Sainte Messe" referred to is printed in Migne, vol. iii. pp. 1295-1302.

Sacrifice of your Redeemer to God His Father, for yourself and for the whole Church. The angels are always present at it in great numbers, as St John Chrysostom says, to do honour to this holy Mystery.<sup>1</sup> And we, when present with them, and with the same intention, cannot but receive propitious influences by such fellowship. The choirs of the Church triumphant with those of the Church militant<sup>2</sup> attract and unite themselves to our Lord in this divine action, that with Him, in Him, and through Him they may ravish the heart of God the Father, and render His mercy all our own.<sup>3</sup> What happiness to a soul to give its affections devoutly for so precious and desirable a good.

If for some strong reason you cannot be present at the celebration of this sovereign Sacrifice by your actual presence, at least you should bring your heart to take part in it by your spiritual presence. At some hour, therefore, in the morning, go in spirit, if you cannot do it in any other way, into the Church, unite your intention with that of all Christians, and perform the same inward act in the place where

<sup>1</sup> "Tunc angeli sacerdoti adsunt, totusque cœlestium virtutum ordo clamat, ac vicinus altaris locus, in illius qui ibidem jacet honorem, iis repletus est" (St Chrys. de Sacerd. vi. 4).

<sup>2</sup> "Therefore with angels and archangels, and with all the company of heaven, we laud and magnify Thy glorious Name" (Preface in the English Communion Service).

<sup>3</sup> "Although we be unworthy, through our manifold sins, to offer unto Thee any sacrifice, yet we beseech Thee to accept this our bounden duty and service; not weighing our merits, but pardoning our offences, through Jesus Christ our Lord; by whom, and with whom, in the unity of the Holy Ghost, all honour and glory be unto Thee, O Father Almighty, world without end. Amen" (The Prayer of Oblation).

you are which you would do if you were really present at the office of the holy Mass in some Church.<sup>1</sup>

Now, to hear the holy Mass either really or mentally, as is fitting :—

First, from the beginning to the point when the priest goes to the altar, make your preparation with him, which consists in placing yourself in the presence of God, recognising your unworthiness, and asking pardon for your faults.

Secondly, from the time when the priest is at the altar to the Gospel, consider the coming of our Lord and His life in this world with a simple and general consideration.

Thirdly, from the Gospel to the end of the Credo, consider the preaching of our Saviour, declare that you wish to live and die in the faith and obedience of the Holy Catholic Church.

Fourthly, from the Credo to the Pater Noster, apply your heart to the mysteries of His holy word, and in unison with the death and Passion of our Redeemer, which are really and essentially represented in this holy Sacrifice, you will, with the priest and with

<sup>1</sup> “There are many persons well disposed by the measures of a holy life to communicate frequently ; but it may happen that they are unavoidably hindered. Some have a timorous conscience ; a fear, a pious fear ; which is indeed sometimes more pitiable than commendable. Others are advised by their spiritual guides to abstain for a time.” . . . “Such persons as these may place themselves upon their knees, and building an altar in their heart, celebrate the death of Christ, and in holy desire joyn with all the Congregations of the Christian world who that day celebrate the holy Communion ; and may serve their devotion by the former prayers and actions Eucharistical, changing only such circumstantial words which relate to the actual participation” (Jeremy Taylor, “Worthy Communicant,” chap. vii. § 3).

the rest of the people, offer it to God the Father, for His honour, and for your salvation.<sup>1</sup>

Fifthly, from the Pater Noster<sup>2</sup> to the Communion, compel yourself to make a thousand desires of the heart—ardently desiring to be for ever joined and united with your Saviour by eternal love.

From the Communion to the end, thank His divine Majesty for His Incarnation, His life, His death, His Passion, and the love which He shows us in this holy Sacrifice,<sup>3</sup> beseeching Him by it to be always propitious to you, to your relatives, to your friends, and to the whole Church; and humbling yourself with your whole heart, receive devoutly the divine blessing which our Lord bestows by the ministry of His office. But if you wish during the Mass to make your meditation on the mysteries which you are following from day to day, it will not be requisite that you should turn yourself aside to do these particular actions; but it will be sufficient that at the beginning you direct your intention to a desire to adore and offer this holy Sacrifice, by the exercise of your meditation and prayer, since in every meditation are found the actions aforesaid, either expressly or tacitly and universally.

<sup>1</sup> “He hath constituted and separated an order of men who, by *showing forth the Lord's death* by sacramental representation, may pray unto God after the same manner that our Lord and High Priest does—that is, offer to God and represent in this solemn prayer and Sacrament Christ as already offered, so sending up a gracious instrument whereby our prayers may, for His sake and in the same manner of intercession be offered unto God in our behalf, and for all them for whom we pray to all those purposes for which Christ dyed” (Jer. Taylor, “Holy Living,” chap. iv. § 10).

<sup>2</sup> The Pater Noster concludes the Canon, and precedes the Communion in the Latin service, and in the Prayer-Book of 1549.

<sup>3</sup> “When the holy man stands at the *Table of blessing* and ministers the rite of consecration, then do as the Angels do,

## CHAPTER XV

*Of Other Exercises which are Public and Common.*

BESIDES this, Philothea, on Festivals and Sundays, you ought to be present at the office of the Mass and of Vespers,<sup>1</sup> as far as opportunity will allow, for these days are dedicated to God, and you ought to do more for His honour and glory on these than on other days. You will by this means experience a thousand delights of devotion, in like manner as St Augustine did, who bears witness in his "Confessions"<sup>2</sup> that when he heard the divine offices at the beginning of his conversion his heart melted in sweetness and his eyes in tears of piety. And then (that I may say it once for all) there is always more profit and consolation in the public offices of the Church than in private exercises, God having thus ordained that common prayer should be preferred to every kind of private prayer.<sup>3</sup>

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who behold, and love, and wonder, that the Son of God should become good to the souls of His servants; that He who cannot suffer any change or lessening, should be broken into pieces, and enter into the body to support and nourish the spirit, and yet at the same time remain in heaven while He descends to thee upon earth" (Jeremy Taylor, "Holy Living," chap. iv. § 10).

<sup>1</sup> "Les fêtes et dimanches, assister à vêpres et dire l'office de Notre Dame" (St Francis, "Petit Règlement de l'Emploi du Temps"; Migne, vol. iii. 1294).

<sup>2</sup> "Quantum flevi in hymnis et canticis tuis, suave sonantis Ecclesiæ tuæ vocibus commotus acriter. Voces illæ influebant auribus meis, et eliquabatur veritas in cor meum, et exæstuebat inde affectus pietatis, et currebant lacrymæ, et bene mihi erat cum eis" (St Aug. Conf. lib. ix. chap. vi.).

<sup>3</sup> "Although we ought at all times humbly to acknowledge our sins before God, yet ought we most chiefly so to do when we assemble and meet together" (Exhortation in Prayer Book).

Enter willingly the brotherhoods in the place where you live,<sup>1</sup> and especially those whose exercises bring most fruit and edification, for in this you will practise obedience of a kind well pleasing to God; and the more so, that though brotherhoods are not commended, they are nevertheless recommended by the Church, which, in witness of her desire that many should enroll themselves, grants indulgences and other privileges to the brotherhoods.<sup>2</sup> And then, too, it is always a charitable thing to concur with others and co-operate with them in their good designs. And though it may happen that we pray as well alone as we do in common in the brotherhoods, and that perhaps we appreciate them more when alone, yet God is more glorified by our union with others, and by our fellowship with our brothers and neighbours in good works.

I say the same of all kinds of prayer and public devotion, and in these we ought as much as possible to set a good example for the edification of our neighbour, and show our affection for the glory of God and the common good.

<sup>1</sup> He had himself practised this in his earlier years. As a student at Paris he joined the "Congrégation de la Sainte Vierge," which was established at the Jesuit College; at Padua, on the advice of the Jesuits, he joined the "Congrégation de l'Annonciation de la Sainte Vierge." As a sub-deacon, in 1593, he established at Annecy the "Confrérie de la Sainte-Croix." The statutes were approved by the Chapter of Annecy. The first meeting was presided over by Claude de Granier, Bishop of Geneva.

<sup>2</sup> "Ce que l'on recommande aux confrères de faire certaines choses, réciter certaines prières, se trouver à certaines assemblées ou processions, se confesser ou communier en certains jours, n'est que de conseil et non de précepte. A ceux qui font telles actions de piété il y a des indulgences concédées, que manquent de gagner ceux qui ne les pratiquent pas; mais manquement tout à fait exempt de péché. Il y a beaucoup à gagner, et n'y a rien à perdre" ("Esprit de St Fr.," part xi. chap. xiii.).

## CHAPTER XVI

*We ought to honour and invoke the Saints.*

SINCE God very often sends us inspirations by His angels, we ought also frequently to send to Him our aspirations by the same means. The holy souls of the departed who are in Paradise with the angels, and, as our Lord says, who are equal and like unto the angels,<sup>1</sup> do also for us the same office of inspiration by their holy prayers. Dear Philothea, let us unite our hearts to these heavenly spirits, to these most happy souls. As the little nightingales learn to sing with the larger ones, so by the sacred intercourse which is held with the saints, we shall know better how to pray and sing the divine praises. "I will sing," said David, "in the sight of the angels."<sup>2</sup>

Honour, revere, and respect with a special love the Blessed and glorious Virgin Mary.<sup>3</sup> She is Mother

<sup>1</sup> St Luke xx. 36, "Neque enim ultra mori poterunt: æquales enim Angelis sunt." St Mark xii. 35, "Sed sunt sicut angeli in Cælis."

<sup>2</sup> Ps. cxxxvii. 1, "In conspectu angelorum psallam tibi" (Ps. cxxxviii., A. V., "before the gods").

<sup>3</sup> The Calendar of the English Prayer Book recognises this pre-eminence of the Blessed Virgin Mary. In addition to the two great Festivals of the Purification and the Annunciation, the Visitation is commemorated on July 2, the Nativity on Sept. 8, and the Conception on Dec. 8. This Calendar, practically the New Calendar of 1561, contains the siftings of the Calendar of the Latin Prayer Book of 1560; while so many were omitted, it is significant that these was retained.

"Ave Maria! thou whose name  
All but adoring love may claim,  
Yet may we reach thy shrine;  
For He, thy Son and Saviour, vows  
To crown all lowly lofty brows  
With love and joy like thine."

—Keble's "Christian Year."

of our sovereign Father, and, in consequence, our Grandmother.<sup>1</sup> Let us resort to her, and let us throw ourselves, as her little children, into her lap with a perfect trust at all times and on every occasion. Let us entreat this sweet Mother, let us invoke her motherly love, and trying to imitate Her virtues, let us have in her presence a true filial heart.<sup>2</sup>

Be very familiar with the angels, regard them frequently as invisibly present in your life; and, above all, love and revere the Angel of the Diocese in which you live, those of the persons among whom you dwell, and especially your own angel. Pray frequently to them, praise them at all times, and seek their aid and help in all your affairs, whether spiritual or temporal, that they may co-operate with you in your intentions.<sup>3</sup>

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“ Virgin Born, we bow before Thee ;  
 Blessed was the womb that bore Thee ;  
 Mary, maid and mother mild,  
 Blessed was she in her Child.”

—Bishop Heber.

<sup>1</sup> The expression is a term of endearment. The Blessed Virgin is the Mother of Him who is the Father of our resurrection life. It has been suppressed in the translation by R. C. of 1762, and in the Dublin edition based upon it. It is explained by the words, “Alas! Philothea, it is indeed good for us to weep over this death and grievous Passion of our Father and Redeemer” (part iv. chap. xiii.). Christ is recognised as “Pater futuri sæculi” (Isa. ix. 6), the “Father of the world to come” (Hymns A. & M., 190), and we are so far His children; cf. chap. ii. note. “Patrem autem futuri sæculi et resurrectionis, quod in nostra vocatione completur” (St Jer. Comm. in Isa. ix. 6, tom. iii. 86).

<sup>2</sup> “La dédicace de son Théotime à cette Reine de la souveraine charité, à ce vaisseau d’incomparable élection, montre assez de quelle tendresse son cœur était saisi quand il avait recours à elle.” (“L’Esprit de St Francis,” part iv. § 30).

<sup>3</sup> St Francis was fond of telling a beautiful story of a newly ordained priest, who told of a dispute he had had with his guardian angel on leaving the church after his ordination: “Avant que je fusse prêtre, ajouta-t-il, ce saint

The great Peter Favre,<sup>1</sup> the first priest, the first preacher, the first Reader of Theology of the holy Company of the name of Jesus, and the first companion of the Blessed Ignatius, the founder of the Order, coming one day from Germany, where he had rendered great service to the glory of our Lord, and passing through this diocese, the place of his birth, tells us that, when he had gone through several centres of heresy, he had received much consolation by being greeted as he approached each parish: the guardian angels of the parish, whom he knew to be favourable to him, sometimes warning them of the ambushes of the heretics, sometimes making many souls gentle and anxious to receive the doctrine of salvation.<sup>2</sup> And he said this with so much earnestness, that four years ago, a lady who had heard it from his lips when young, was able to repeat it with great feeling more

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ange marchait toujours devant moi ; mais aujourd'hui il s'est arrêté à la porte, et a voulu, pour honorer mon caractère sacerdotal, me faire passer le premier, disant qu'il est mon serviteur et celui de tous les prêtres" (Migne, vol. i. p. 533).

<sup>1</sup> The Blessed Peter Favre was born at Villaret in the valley of the Grand Bornand in Savoy in 1506. St Francis Xavier shared his room at the College of St Barbara at Paris in 1525. The two friends were joined by St Ignatius Loyola in 1529. Favre, as the only priest among them, celebrated at Montmartre, on the Feast of the Assumption, 1534, when St Ignatius and his six companions took the first vows which led to the formation of the Society of Jesus. He began his work of Apostolic mission in 1539 at Parma, and laboured with wonderful results in Germany, Spain, the Low Countries, and Portugal, until his death at Rome in 1546.

<sup>2</sup> "This, too, I resolved to do in every kingdom or province where I might happen to be, namely, to commend myself to the principal angels, archangels, angels guardian, and saints whom I knew to be chiefly honoured in such province or kingdom" ("Memorial or Spiritual Diary of Blessed Peter Favre," ann. 1541).

than sixty years afterwards. I had great pleasure last year in consecrating an altar on the spot where God caused this saintly man to be born, in the little village of Villaret, in the midst of the rugged mountains.<sup>1</sup>

Choose some saints in particular, whose lives you are drawn to and may best imitate, and on whose intercession you may place a special trust. Your namesaint has already been assigned to you since your baptism.

## CHAPTER XVII

### *How to hear and read the Word of God.*

BE reverent towards the Word of God, whether you listen to it in familiar intercourse with your spiritual friends, or whether you listen to it in the sermon. Hear it always with attention and reverence. Use it to your profit, and suffer it not to fall to the earth, but receive it as a precious balm within your soul, in imitation of the most holy Virgin, who preserved with care in her own soul all the words which she heard in praise of her child.<sup>2</sup> And remember that our Lord gathers up the words which we say to Him in our prayers in proportion as we gather up those which He says to us through the sermon.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> St Francis, as Bishop of Geneva, when making his visitation at St Jean de Sixt, Oct. 9, 1607, consecrated the altar of the chapel at Villaret, on the site of the house of the Favres. The function lasted three hours, and St Francis preached a sermon in which he set forth the virtues, merits, and holy life of the Blessed Peter Favre ("Life of Bl. Pet. Favre," tr. by Fr. Coleridge, p. 189).

<sup>2</sup> St Luke ii. 51, "Et mater ejus conservabat omnia verba hæc in corde sua."

<sup>3</sup> "Saint Charles Borromée ne lisait dans l'écriture qu'à genoux, comme s'il eût écouté Dieu, parlant sur Sina parmi les feux et les tonnerres; et notre bienheureux Père ne

Have always near you some good book of devotion,<sup>1</sup> such as those of St Bonaventura,<sup>2</sup> of Gerson,<sup>3</sup> of Dionysius the Carthusian,<sup>4</sup> of Louis Blossius,<sup>5</sup> of Granada,<sup>6</sup>

voulait pas qu'on la maniât ni qu'on la traitât, soit en parlant en public, soit en écrivant, soit en la lisant en particulier, qu'avec une extrême révérence" ("L'Esprit de St Francois," part ii. § 17).

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Jeremy Taylor: "Use the advice of some spiritual or other prudent man for the choice of such spiritual books which may be of use and benefit for the edification of thy spirit in the waies of holy living" (chap. iv. § 4).

<sup>2</sup> St Bonaventura: see chap. i. note.

<sup>3</sup> John Gerson was born in 1363. As Chancellor of Paris he was present at the Council of Pisa in 1409. His works are recommended in letters to the Abbess of Puy d'Orbe, May 1604, and to Madame de Chantal, Nov. 1604. The reference here is to the "Imitation," ascribed to him by many writers of the period instead of to Thomas à Kempis.

<sup>4</sup> Dionysius the Carthusian, a mystical writer of the fifteenth century, *ob.* 1471. He supported Pius II. in his desire to unite Christendom against the Turks: "Ecce principes populi tui, qui deberent fidem tuam defendere, adversarios expugnare, Ecclesiæ Tuæ terminos et cultum Christianæ plebis augere, ecce nunc pugnas contra se componunt, et gravibus se præliis atterere moliuntur." His prayer was supported by his writings against the Koran (*Annal. Eccl. Rayn.*, ann. 1460).

<sup>5</sup> Louis of Blois, Abbot of Liesse, a Flemish Benedictine, died 1563. He was the author of the "Institutio Spiritualis." A complete edition of his works was published at Cologne in 1589. Is this the "Pratique Spirituelle" referred to in letter of Oct. 1604?

<sup>6</sup> Luis de Granada; see chap. i. note. His works are recommended in letters of May and October 1604 to the Abbess of Puy d'Orbe. In the letter dated October 13, 1604, it is stated that an edition of his works had recently been printed at Paris. A complete edition of his works in the original Spanish, in 9 vols. 4to, was published at Madrid, 1768.

of Stella,<sup>1</sup> of Arias,<sup>2</sup> of Pinelli,<sup>3</sup> of Du Ponte,<sup>4</sup> of Avila,<sup>5</sup> the "Spiritual Combat,"<sup>6</sup> the "Confessions of St Augustine,"<sup>7</sup> the "Epistles of St Jerome,"<sup>8</sup> and such like, and read them a little

<sup>1</sup> F. Didacus Stella, Observant Minorite. Editions of his Comm. on St Luke were published at Antwerp in 1584, and at Leyden in 1592.

<sup>2</sup> Arias: cf. note on part i. chap. vi.

<sup>3</sup> Luca Pinelli. His "Le Gerson des Religieux" was printed at Lyons and Paris, and is recommended in the letters of Oct. 9 and Oct. 13, 1604, to the Abbess of Puy d'Orbe. The "Opusculum piarum meditationum" of Pinelli and Loarti was published at Douay, 1605-6.

<sup>4</sup> Da Ponte; cf. chap. i. note 15.

<sup>5</sup> Avila; cf. note on part i. chap. iv. note.

<sup>6</sup> The "Spiritual Combat" was given to St Francis by Fr. Scupoli himself when at Padua in 1589. The Benedictines attribute it to D. Juan Castanisa, a Spaniard; the Theatine Fathers to D. Lorenzo Scupoli; the Jesuit Fr. Theophile Raynaud to Fr. Achilleo Gagliardo, a Jesuit. It was a special favourite with St Francis. He recommends it to the Abbess of Puy d'Orbe in a letter of April 1604. He never tires of praising it to Madame de Chantal. "Le livre de la *Méthode de servir Dieu* est bon, mais embarrassé et difficile plus qu'il ne vous est requis: celui du *Combat Spirituel* contient tout ce qu'il dit, et plus méthodiquement," April 1606. "Lisez le xxviii<sup>e</sup>. chapitre du 'Combat Spirituel,' qui est *mon cher livre*, et que je porte en ma poche il y a bien dix-huit ans, et que je ne relis jamais sans profit," July 1607. "Vous en trouverez je ne sais quoi dans le petit livre du 'Combat Spirituel,' que je vous ai si souvent recommandé," Nov. 1607. "Oui, ma fille, le 'Combat Spirituel' est un grand livre," Jan. 1608. To Madame Brulart he writes: "Lisez fort le 'Combat Spirituel,'" Oct. 1604. To a lady, "Lisez et relisez le 'Combat Spirituel': ce doit être notre cher livre, il est clair et tout praticable," Nov. 1607,

<sup>7</sup> The "Confessions of St Augustine," written c. 400, take the first place after the "Retractationes" in the Benedictine edition of St Augustine.

<sup>8</sup> The Letters of St Jerome from 365 to 400 are printed in the Benedictine edition, tom. iv. part ii. Translations by Canon Fremantle form the principal part of the "Oxford

every day, with great devotion, as if you were reading letters sent from the saints in heaven to show you the way and to give you the courage to walk in it. Read also the Histories and Lives of the Saints, in which you will see, as in a mirror, the picture of the Christian life, and suit their actions to your profit according to your own calling. For though many of the actions of the saints cannot be absolutely imitated by those who live in the world, yet all may be followed more or less closely. The solitude of St Paul, the first hermit,<sup>1</sup> is imitated by the spiritual and real retreats of which we shall speak, and have already spoken above; the poverty of St Francis,<sup>2</sup> by the practice of such poverty as we shall note; and so also with regard to others. It is true that there are certain histories which shed more light on the conduct of our lives than others. The life of the Blessed Mother Teresa<sup>3</sup> is admirable

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Library of Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers," second series, vol. vi.

<sup>1</sup> St Paul, the first hermit, fled into the desert about 253, at the time of the Decian Persecution, at the age of sixteen. He lived in the desert until 351, when he died in the presence of St Anthony (St Jer., "Vit S. Pauli Erem.," tom. iv. part ii).

<sup>2</sup> St Francis of Assisi renounced the world in 1206. His Order was confirmed by Pope Innocent III. in 1215. He died in 1226.

"Ma perch' io non proceda troppo chiuso  
Francesco e Povertà per questi amanti  
Prendi oramai nel mio parlar diffuso."

—Dante, "Paradiso," xi. 74-76.

<sup>3</sup> The Blessed Mother Teresa. She was not canonised till 1622. Cp. part i. chap. iv. note. "Perhaps there are only two such histories which can really be reckoned amongst the great books of Christendom, the 'Confessions of St Augustine,' and the 'Life of St Teresa'; and it is remarkable that one of them should have been the work of a woman" ("The Life of St Teresa," by Author of "Devotions before and after Holy Communion," p. 3).

for this purpose; so also are the lives of the first Jesuits,<sup>1</sup> that of St Carlo Borromeo,<sup>2</sup> Archbishop of Milan, of St Louis,<sup>3</sup> of St Bernard,<sup>4</sup> the Chronicles of St Francis,<sup>5</sup> and others. There are others which are more the subject of admiration than of imitation, such as those of St Mary of Egypt,<sup>6</sup> of St Simeon

<sup>1</sup> The Lives of the Blessed Ignatius Loyola, the First General, by Fr. Maffei, and of Father James Laynez, the Second, and Father Francis Borgia, Duke of Gandia, the Third General, by Fr. Ribadeneyra, were published together in French in 1613. The first life of the Blessed Peter Favre was by Orlandini. The life of St Francis Xavier by Torsellino was published in 1596.

<sup>2</sup> St Carlo Borromeo was made Archbishop of Milan in 1560; *ob.* 1584. "Carolus Borromeus non splendore purpuræ, non opum affluentia, non honorum gloria, non aulici apparatus fastu illusus, sed humanis omnibus celsior ad Divina ardentius aspiravit" ("Annal. Eccl. Rayn.," ann. 1560). St Francis used the life by Carlo a Basilica Petri; the life by Giussano was published at Paris, 1610.

<sup>3</sup> St Louis IX. of France. St Francis chiefly uses the Life by Joinville.

<sup>4</sup> St Bernard, Abbot of Clairvaux, *ob.* 1153. "Vere Apostolicus vir, immo verus Apostolus missus a Deo potens opere et sermone, illustrans ubique et in omnibus suum Apostolatium sequentibus signis" ("Annal. Eccl. Baron.," ann. 1153).

<sup>5</sup> The Chronicles of St Francis, by Albertus Stadensis, whose Chronicles Raynaldus quotes for the life of St Francis. "Cujus nobilis historici cum mentio occurrat, non præterimus taciti ita literis perpolitum fuisse, ut longe pietate cultior et ornatior videretur" ("Annal. Eccl. Rayn.," ann. 1240).

<sup>6</sup> St Mary of Egypt is frequently represented in art with St Mary Magdelene as a type of penitence. "At Palestine the feest of saynt Mary egyptcyaka, so called bycause she was borne in egypt that from thens came unto the cite of alexander and there from the age of xii yeres unto xxix she lyved all in fylthy lechery a comyn woman than came she unto Jerusalem to se the holy crosse but Chryst wolde not suffre her to come in to the temple than she loked by and

Stylites,<sup>1</sup> of the two saints St Catherine of Sienna<sup>2</sup> and St Catherine of Genoa,<sup>3</sup> of St Angela,<sup>4</sup> and others like them, which nevertheless give a strong general desire for the holy love of God.

## CHAPTER XVIII

*How to receive Inspirations.*

WE call inspirations all the inward inclinations, movements, reproaches, and regrets, the light and knowledge which God shed within us, filling our hearts with His blessing by His care and fatherly love. This He does that He may awake us and stir us up, push us forward, and draw us on to holy virtues, to heavenly love, to good resolutions, in short

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saw an ymage of our blessed lady before which she kneled and w<sup>t</sup> depe contrycyon and plenteous teres wepyng besought her of helpe and socour and than she entred in to the temple and honoured the holy crosse w<sup>t</sup> grete reverence and depe devocyon mekely besechyng forgyvenes and mercy" ("The Martiloge in Englysshe," 1526, April 2nd; "Annal. Eccl. Baron.," ann. 525.)

<sup>1</sup> "At Antioch the feest of saynt Symeon a monke, whose lyfe and conversacyon was mervaylous holy" ("Martiloge"). He flourished under Theodosius II., 408-450. The whole world gathered round his pillar. "Sic autem omnibus undique advenientibus, et per totam viam instar fluminis affluentibus, videre est pelagus hominum in illo loco constitutum, quod fluvios undiquaque excipit. Venerunt autem multi quoque, qui habitant extrema occidentis, Hispani (inquam) et Britanni, et Galli" ("Theod. ap. Annal. Eccles. Baron.," ann. 432).

<sup>2</sup> St Catherine of Sienna. Cp. part i. chap. iv. note.

<sup>3</sup> St Catherine of Genoa. Cp. part i. chap. vi. note.

<sup>4</sup> St Angela di Foligno, a widow of Foligno, died 1309. Her life was written by her confessor Arnaldi. She is commemorated January 4.

to all that leads us to our eternal good.<sup>1</sup> It is this which the Bridegroom calls knocking at the door and speaking to the Bride, awaking her when she is asleep, crying to her and calling her back when she is absent, inviting her to gather His honey and the apples and flowers in His garden, to sing and make music with her sweet voice in His ears.<sup>2</sup>

For the full purpose of marriage three actions ought to be considered as regards the lady whom we wish to marry. First we make the proposal, secondly she favours it, and thirdly she consents. So God when He wishes to perform in us, through us, and with us some act of great charity, first proposes it to us by His inspiration, secondly we favour it, thirdly we consent to it. For as there are three steps by which we fall into sin, the temptation, the delight, and the consent,<sup>3</sup> so also there

<sup>1</sup> "Non loquatur mihi Moyses, aut aliquis ex prophetis: sed tu potius loquere, Domine Deus, inspirator et illuminator omnium prophetarum: quia tu solus sine eis potes me perfecte imbuere, illi autem sine te nihil proficient. Pulchriter dicunt: sed te tacente, cor non accendunt. Mandata edicunt, sed tu juvas ad perficiendum. Viam ostendunt, sed tu confortas ad ambulandum" ("De Imit. Chr.," iii. 2).

<sup>2</sup> Cant. v. 2, "Ego dormio, et cor meum vigilat: vox dilecti mei pulsantis: Aperi mihi, soror mea." II. 13, "Surge, amica mea, speciosa mea, et veni." V. 1, "Veni in hortum meum, soror mea sponsa, comedi favum cum melle meo." II. 14, "Sonet vox tua in auribus meis: vox enim tua dulcis, et facies tua decora."

<sup>3</sup> "Non enim in ipso desiderio pravo, sed in nostra consensione peccamus" (St. Aug. Exp. ad Rom. xvi., t. iii. part ii. 905). "Talis nunc in uno homine tentationis est ordo et progressio, qualis tunc in primis præcessit parentibus. Ut tunc serpens malum suasit mulieri, ipsaque consensit, deinde viro suo dedit, sicque consummatum est peccatum: ita et nunc in nobis pro serpente est sensualis motus animæ, pro muliere inferior portio rationis, pro viro superior rationis portio. . . . Atque inter hunc virum et hanc mulierem est velut quoddam spirituale conjugium

are three by which we climb to virtue, the inspiration which is contrary to the temptation, the delight in the inspiration which is contrary to the delight in temptation, and the consent to the inspiration which is contrary to the consent to temptation.

Since inspiration should last all our life, we should in no way be acceptable to God if we did not take pleasure in it. On the contrary, His divine Majesty would be offended, as He was offended with the Israelites, with whom, as He says, He was grieved forty years, praying them to be converted without their ever having a desire to hear Him: "Wherefore He swore against them in His wrath that they should not enter into His rest."<sup>1</sup> The gentleman who has long shown his love to a lady would indeed be much hurt if after all she was in no way willing to hear of the marriage which he desired.

The pleasure which we take in inspirations is a great step to the glory of God. We already begin by them to be pleasing to his divine Majesty. For if indeed this delight is not as yet a complete consent, it is a certain disposition to it; and if it is a good sign and a most useful thing to have pleasure in hearing the Word of God, which is as it were an outward inspiration, it is good also and acceptable to God to take pleasure in the inward inspiration. It is this pleasure of which the holy Bride speaks when she says: "My soul is melted with comfort when my well-beloved has spoken."<sup>2</sup>

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*naturalisque contractus*" (Pet. Lomb. Sent. lib. ii. Dist. xxiv. G.).

<sup>1</sup> Ps. xciv. 10, 11, "Quadraginta annis offensus fui generationi illi et dixi: Semper hi errant corde et isti non cognoverunt vias meas: ut juravi in ira mea: si introibunt in requiem meum" (Ps. xciv., A.V.).

<sup>2</sup> Cant. v. 6, "Anima mea liquefacta est, ut locutus est (dilectus meus)."

So also the gentleman is already well pleased with the lady whom he loves, and feels himself encouraged when he sees that she also has pleasure in his love.

But yet it is the consent which perfects the virtuous act. For if when we are inspired, and have pleasure in the inspiration, we yet refuse after all to give our consent to God, we are extremely ungrateful, and seriously offend His divine Majesty, for we seem rather to show our contempt for Him. This it was which happened to the Bride; for though the sweet voice of her well-beloved had touched her heart with a holy comfort, yet nevertheless she did not open the door to Him, but made some frivolous excuse. Therefore the Bridegroom, being justly offended, passed aside and left her.<sup>1</sup> So the gentleman who has for a long time shown his affection for a lady, and has rendered her acceptable service, would, if he were at length rejected and despised, have more cause for dissatisfaction than would have been the case had he not been favoured and encouraged. Resolve, Philothea, to accept with a good heart the inspirations with which it will please God to inspire you; and when they come accept them as the Ambassadors of the heavenly King, who desires to contract a marriage with you. Hear their proposals quietly, consider the love with which you are inspired, and caress the holy inspiration.

Give a full, loving, and steadfast consent to holy inspirations. For thus God, on whom you cannot lay an obligation, will hold Himself the more strongly bound by your affection. But before you consent to

<sup>1</sup> Cant. v. 3, "Expoliavi me tunica mea, quomodo induar illa? lavi pedes meos, quomodo inquinabo illos?"

V. 6, "Pessulum ostii mei aperui dilecto meo: at ille declinaverat, atque transierat."

inspirations in important or extraordinary matters, lest you should in any way be deceived, take counsel always of your director, that he may examine whether the inspirations be true or false,<sup>1</sup> inasmuch as the enemy, when he sees a soul quick to consent to inspirations, frequently proposes those which are false that he may deceive it.<sup>2</sup> This can never happen if with humility it obeys its director. When consent is given, we must attain the results with great care, and arrive at the fulfilment of the inspiration, which is the summit of true motive. For to have the consent within the heart without attaining its effect, would be like planting a vine without wishing it to bear fruit.

To bring about all this, it is of the highest importance to practise the exercise of the morning and the spiritual retreats which I have already mentioned, for by this means we prepare ourselves to gain the best results from a preparation which is not only general but special.

<sup>1</sup> St Teresa was much troubled at one period by her visions and divine locutions. She went to San Egidio, the Jesuits' church in Avila, to see her director, Alvarez, and there he told her that they were all of opinion that she was deceived by Satan. She, however, received encouragement in 1560 from St Peter of Alcantara. He bade her "not be distressed, but to praise God, and to abide in the full conviction that this was the work of the Spirit of God" ("Life of St Teresa," anon., pp. 111-34).

<sup>2</sup> "Il se transforme en Ange de lumière; il nous pousse à la perfection, et nous la fait désirer aveuglement et sans nul égard à notre foiblesse: il nous inspire des pensées dévotes" ("Spiritual Combat," chap. xlii.).

## CHAPTER XIX

*Of Holy Confession.*

OUR Saviour has left to His Church the Sacrament of Penitence and Confession, that in it we may cleanse ourselves of all our iniquities, as often and as much as we have been stained by them. Do not therefore, Philothea, ever allow your heart to remain long infected with sin, since you have so ready and so easy a remedy. The lioness that has lain with the leopard goes at once to wash away the smell which his near presence has left about her, that the lion, when he comes back, shall not be offended and irritated.<sup>1</sup> The soul which has consented to sin should have a horror of itself, and cleanse itself as soon as possible, out of respect which it ought to show to the eyes of the divine Majesty who beholds it. Why should we die the spiritual death, since we have so sovereign a remedy?

Confess yourselves humbly and devoutly every week, and always, if you can, when you are about to communicate, though you may not feel in your conscience any reproach of mortal sin.<sup>2</sup> For by confession you will not only receive absolution of the venial sins which you confess, but you will receive also great strength to avoid them in the future, a great light to discern them,

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Pliny, "Hist. Nat.," viii. 17.

<sup>2</sup> "Avant que de communier, quelque puisse être notre motif, nous devons toujours purifier notre âme par le Sacrement de la Pénitence, si nous nous sentons coupables de quelque péché mortel" ("Combat Spir.," chap. liv.).

"On lui recommandera aussi de se confesser tous les huit jours" (St Ign., "Spir. Exer. Annot.," xviii.).

"N'oubliez pas de vous confesser tous les huit jours, et quand vous aurez quelque grand ennui de conscience" ("Letter to Madame la Présidente Brulart," Oct. 1604).

and abundant grace to repair all the loss which they have brought to you. You will practise the virtues of humility, of obedience, of simplicity, and of charity, and in this sole action of confession you will exercise more virtue than in any other.

Have always a real dislike of the sins which you confess, however small they may be, with a firm resolution<sup>1</sup> to correct them in the future. Many who by habit make confession of venial sins, and as it were in an easy manner, without in any way thinking to correct them,<sup>2</sup> live their whole life burdened with them, and thus lose many benefits and spiritual profits. If, therefore, you confess that you have lied, though it be without harm, or that you have used bad language, or that you have played too much, repent of it, and have a firm purpose to amend your life. For it is an abuse to make confession of any kind of sin, whether mortal or venial, without wishing to be cleansed of it, since confession is only instituted to that end.

Do not make superfluous accusations, as many do, or mere form: "I have not loved God as much as I ought"; "I have not prayed with as much devotion as I ought"; "I have not loved my neighbour as I ought"; "I have not received the Sacraments as reverently as I ought"—and such-like forms. The reason is, that in saying this you say nothing particular, nothing which will enable the confessor to learn the state of your conscience, since all the saints of Paradise,

<sup>1</sup> "To examine themselves whether they repent them to-day of their former sins, steadfastly purposing to lead a new life" (The English Catechism, Add. of 1603).

<sup>2</sup> "After the beginnings of thy recovery, be infinitely fearfull of a relapse, and therefore upon the stock of thy sad experience, observe where thy failings were, and by especiall arts fortifie that faculty, and arm against that temptation" (Jeremy Taylor, "Holy Living," chap. iv. § 9).

and all the men on earth could say the same things if they were to confess. Look, therefore, at some particular subject of which you can make such an accusation. When you have discovered it, accuse yourself of the fault you have committed quite simply and sincerely. For instance, you accuse yourself of not having loved your neighbour as you ought; it is perhaps because having seen some poor beggar whom you could easily have helped and comforted, you have had no care at all of him. And accuse yourself of this in particular, and say, "I have seen a poor beggar. I have not helped him as I ought, by my negligence, or hardness of heart, or contempt," according to your knowledge of the occasion of your fault. In the same way, do not accuse yourself of not praying to God with as much devotion as you ought; but if your distractions have been voluntary, or you have neglected the place, the time, the behaviour which are required to give attention to prayer, accuse yourself simply of these, according as you find that you have failed, without making the general statement which only renders the confession neither cold nor hot.

Do not be content with stating your venial sins only as to the fact, but accuse yourself of the motive which led you to commit them. For instance, do not be content with saying that you have lied, without reference to any one; but say if it has been done either for the sake of vain-glory, so as to praise and excuse yourself, or for amusement, or in obstinacy. If you have sinned at play, explain if it has been for the desire of gain, or for the pleasure of society; and so in other cases. State whether you have been long indulging in your sin, inasmuch as length of time ordinarily increases the sin considerably, there being much difference between a passing vanity which may

flow through the spirit for the space of a quarter of an hour and that with which our heart may have been deceived for a day or two days or three days. We must therefore state the fact, the motive, and the duration of our sins. For though, as a rule, there is no obligation to be too punctilious in the declaration of our venial sins, and we are not absolutely bound to confess them, yet those who wish to purify their souls, that they may the better attain to holy devotion, ought to be careful to bring before their spiritual physican the evil, however small it may be, of which they wish to be cured.<sup>1</sup>

Do not hesitate to say what is requisite for a full knowledge of the quality of your offence, such as the matter which has put you in a passion, or which has supported some one in vice. For instance, a man whom I dislike says some light word in joke; I take it in bad part, and go into a passion. If another whom I like were to say some much harsher word, I should take it in good part. I will not hesitate therefore to say, "I have given way to angry words against some one, having taken in bad part something which he has said, not on account of the words themselves, but on account of my dislike of the man." And if there is need to specify the words to explain yourself the

<sup>1</sup> "Because we may very much be helped if we take in the assistance of a spiritual Guide: therefore the Church of God in all ages hath commended, and in most ages enjoined that we confess our sins and discover the state and condition of our souls to such a person whom we or our superiours judge fit to help us in such needs." . . . "And it were well if this duty were practised prudently and innocently in order to publick discipline, or private comfort and instruction." . . . "He is careful of his eternal interest that will not lose the advantage of using a private guide and judge" (Jeremy Taylor, "Holy Living," chap. iv. § 9).

better, I think it would be well to repeat them. For in accusing ourselves thus simply, we discover not only the sins we have committed, but also the evil inclinations, manners, habits, and other roots of sin, by means of which our spiritual Father may have a more complete knowledge of the heart with which he is dealing, and of the remedies which are fitting for it. But you ought always, as much as possible, to cover the third person who has co-operated in your sin.

Beware of a number of sins which often live and reign insensibly in the conscience, that you may confess them and be able to cleanse yourself of them.<sup>1</sup> And to this effect read carefully chapters vi., xxvii., xxviii., xxix., xxxv., and xxxvi. of the *Third Part*, and chapter vii. of the *Fourth Part*. Do not lightly change your confessor.<sup>2</sup> But when you have chosen one, continue to give him an account of your conscience on the days which are allotted for it, telling him simply and frankly the sins you have committed, and from time to time, it may be from month to month, or from two months to two months, tell him also the state of your inclinations, even though you have not sinned through them; as, for instance, if you are troubled with sadness, or grief, or have yielded to joy or to desire of gain, or to similar inclinations.

<sup>1</sup> "Defer not at all to repent; much lesse mayst thou put it off to thy death-bed: It is not an easie thing to root out the habits of sin, which a man's whole life hath gathered and confirmed" (Jeremy Taylor, "Holy Living," chap. iv. § 9).

<sup>2</sup> "Choose one among at housand," says Avila; "I would say, among ten thousand." "Having found him, remain firm, and do not look for others" (Part I., chap. iv.).

## CHAPTER XX

*Of Frequent Communion.*

[T is said of Mithridates,<sup>1</sup> King of Pontus, that having found the mithridate,<sup>2</sup> he strengthened his body to such an extent with it that when he tried afterwards to poison himself, that he might evade the servitude of the Romans, he was not able to do it. The Saviour has instituted the venerable Sacrament of the Eucharist, which really contains His Body and His Blood,<sup>3</sup> that he who eats it may live eternally.

<sup>1</sup> Mithridates VI., King of Pontus, 120-63 B.C. "Scriptum a Lenæo Pompeii liberto, Mithridatem Ponti regem remediorum contra venena solertem fuisse, solitumque anatum Ponticarum sanguinem miscere medicamentis quæ digerendis venenis valent" (Aulus Gellius, "Noct. Attic.," xvii. 18).

<sup>2</sup> Mithridate, Woolfesbane: Anthora. "This plant, called Anthora, being the antidote against the poison of Thora, Aconite, or Woolfesbane, hath slender, hollowe stalkes, very brittle, a cubit high, furnished with fine cut or jagged leaves, very like to Nigella Romana or the common Larke-spurre, called Consolida Regulis; at the top of the stalkes, do grow fair flowers, fashioned like a little helmet, of an overworn yellow colour." "The inhabitants of the lake of Geneva and the Piedmontese do call it Anthora." "Antonius Gaunerius doth shew that it is an herbe that groweth hard by that herbe Thora, of which there is made a poison, wherewith they of Savoy and those parts adjacent do envenome their arrowes the more speedily to kill the wilde Goates and other wilde beasts of the Alpish Mountains" (Gerarde, "Herbale," p. 820).

"I feel me ill: give me some mithridate:

Some mithridate and oil, good sister, fetch me."

—Ben Jonson, "Every Man in his Humour," iv. 6.

"Well, fools may talk of mithridates, cordials, and elixirs."

—Fletcher, "Sea Voyage," v. 2.

<sup>3</sup> "They ought and must constantly believe that under the form and figure of bread and wine, which we there presently do see and perceive by outward senses, is verily, substantially,

Whosoever frequently makes use of it with devotion so strengthens the health and life of his soul that it is nearly impossible for him to be poisoned by any kind of evil affection. We cannot be nourished with this flesh of life and live in the affections of death. As men who dwelt in the earthly Paradise could not die in the body, by reason of the vital force which God had given to them,<sup>1</sup> so they will not be able to die in spirit by virtue of this Sacrament of life. For if fruits which are most tender and most subject to decay, such as cherries, apricots, and strawberries, may be easily kept the whole year when preserved in sugar or

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and really contained and comprehended the very self-same body and blood of our Saviour Jesu Christ" ("The Bishop's Book," 1537).

"Respondeo dicendum, quod verum corpus Christi et sanguinem esse in hoc sacramento, sensu deprehendi non potest, sed sola fide." "Et ideo hoc sacramentum quod ipsum Christum realiter continet, est perfectissimum omnium sacramentorum, in quibus virtus Christi participatur" (St Thom., "Summa," part iii. Qu. lxxvi. 5).

"Corpus Christi non est in hoc sacramento sicut in loco, sed per modum substantiæ" (St Thom., "Summa," part iii. Qu. lxxvi. 5).

"Sub diversis speciebus  
Signis tantum et non rebus.  
Latent res eximiæ."

—St Thom., "Lauda Sion."

"Of the due receiving of His Blessed Body and Blood under the form of Bread and Wine" (Note at end of "First Book of Homilies").

"In the Supper of the Lord there is no vain ceremony, no bare sign, no untrue figure of a thing absent" (Homily "conc. the Sacr.," part i).

"To every faithful soul appear  
And show Thy Real Presence here."

—Wesley's Euch. Hymns: "Victim Divine."

<sup>1</sup> Gen. iii. 22, "Nunc ergo, ne forte mittat manum suam et sumat etiam de ligno vitæ, et comedat, et vivat in-  
eternum."

honey, it is not surprising if our hearts, however frail and weak they may be, are kept from the corruption of sin when they are preserved in the sugar and honey of the Flesh and incorruptible Blood of the Son of God. O Philothea! the Christians who will be damned, will dwell without excuse when the just Judge leads them to see the wrong they have done in dying in the Spirit, since it might have been so easy for them to maintain themselves in life and health by eating His Body, which was left them for this purpose. "Unhappy souls," He will say, "why are ye dead, when ye had at your command the fruit and the food of life?"

"To receive the Communion of the Eucharist daily, I do not praise it, neither do I condemn it; but to communicate every Sunday, I advise it, and exhort each one to do it, provided that his spirit be without any affection of sin."<sup>1</sup> These are the very words of St Augustine, and with him I do not condemn, neither do I praise absolutely him who communicates daily. But if any one wish to make a resolution on this point, I leave it to the discretion of his spiritual father; for the disposition needful for so frequent Communion being a matter of most careful deliberation, it is not wise to counsel it as a general rule. And because this disposition, though delicate, may be found in many good souls, it is not wise as a rule to dissuade or to turn any one away from it. This must be determined by the consideration of the inward state of each one in particular. It would be imprudent

<sup>1</sup> "Quotidie Eucharistiæ communionem percipere nec laudo nec vitupero. Omnibus tamen dominicis diebus communicandum suadeo et hortor, si tamen mens in affectis peccandi non sit" ("De Eccles. Dogm.," chap. xxiii. : Gennadius?).

It is attributed to St Aug. (Peter Lomb. Sent. lib. ii. dist. 35). "Quo circa" (St Aug., tom. viii., App. 78).

to counsel every one indiscriminately to practise so frequent a Communion, but it would be equally imprudent to blame any one for it, and especially if he was following the advice of some worthy director. The reply of St Catherine of Sienna<sup>1</sup> was courteous when she was rebuked for her frequent Communion, on the ground that St Augustine neither praised nor condemned the practice of daily communion. "Well," she said, "since St Augustine did not condemn it, I beg you not to condemn it either, and I shall be content."

But, Philothea, you see that St Augustine exhorts and counsels strongly that we should communicate every Sunday. Do it, therefore, as much as possible. Since, as I presume, you have no sort of affection for mortal sin, nor any affection for venial sin, you are in the true disposition which St Augustine requires, and indeed in a more excellent state, because not only have you no affection for sinning, but no affection even for sin; so that should your spiritual father think it well, you could with profit communicate even more often than every Sunday.<sup>2</sup>

Many legitimate hindrances may nevertheless occur, not only on your part, but on the part of those with

<sup>1</sup> "Si B. Augustinus non vituperat, Domine, quare vos vultis vituperare" ("Vit.," part ii. chap. xvii.).

<sup>2</sup> "After all this, it is advised by the Guides of souls, wise men and pious, that all persons should communicate very often, even as often as they can without excuses or delays: Everything that puts us from so holy employment when we are moved to it, being either a sin or imperfection: an infirmity or indevotion, and an unactiveness of spirit" (Jeremy Taylor, "Holy Living," chap. iv. § 10).

[*N.B.*—This passage was written with the "Devout Life" before him. It is valuable as showing his high opinion of St Francis and his work, cp. p. 160.]

whom you live, which may give occasion to a prudent director to tell you that you should not communicate so often. For instance, if you should be in some sort of subjection, and those to whom you owe obedience or reverence should be either badly instructed or so selfish that they are anxious and troubled at seeing you communicate so often, it may happen, all things considered, that it will be well in some degree to fall in with their weakness, and only to communicate every fortnight. But this is only in case you are not able to overcome the difficulty. I cannot determine this matter as a rule. You must do what your spiritual father tells you, though I can assure you that the longest interval between your communions should be from month to month, if you wish to serve God devoutly.

If you are prudent, neither mother nor wife, neither husband nor father, should hinder you from communicating frequently. For since, in the day of your Communion, you will not fall short in the care which is fitting to your condition, but will be more gentle and courteous towards them, and will not refuse to fulfil any of your duties, it is not likely that this will hinder you from this practice, unless they are of an altogether obstinate and unreasonable spirit. In this case, it may be, as I have said, that your director will counsel your falling in in some way with their wish.

I must say one word to the married.<sup>1</sup> God found

<sup>1</sup> "For if ever it be seasonable to observe the counsell of St Paul that married persons by consent should abstain for a time that they may attend to solemn religion, it is now. It was not by Saint Paul nor the after ages of the Church called a duty so to do, but it is most reasonable that the more solemn actions of Religion should be attended to without the mixture of anything that may discompose the minde, and

fault in the old Law with those creditors who exacted their dues on festivals; <sup>1</sup> but He never found fault with those debtors who paid and fulfilled their dues to those who exacted them. It is indecent, though not a great sin, to solicit the payment of the nuptial dues on the day on which we communicate. But it is not improper but rather meritorious to pay them. This is why, for the rendering of this duty, no one ought to be deprived of Communion, if otherwise her devotion provoke her to desire it. Indeed in the primitive Church Christians communicated daily, though they were married and blessed by the birth of children. This is why I have said that frequent Communion should give no sort of inconvenience either to father, or wife, or husband, provided that the soul who communicates is prudent and discreet. As to bodily infirmities, there are none which should hinder you lawfully from this holy participation, unless it be that which frequently tends to vomiting.

To communicate every week, it is requisite that we have neither mortal sin nor any affection for venial sin, and have a great desire to communicate. To communicate daily, we must, in addition to this, have overcome the greater part of our evil inclinations, and be under the advice of our spiritual father.<sup>2</sup>

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make it more secular, or less religious" (Jeremy Taylor, "Holy Living," chap. iv. § 10).

<sup>1</sup> Deut. xv. 1, 2, "Septimo die facies remissionem, quæ hoc ordine celebrabitur. Cui debetur aliquid ab amico vel proximo ac fratre suo, repetere non poterit, quia annus remissionis est Domini."

<sup>2</sup> "Ideoque oportet me, frequenter ad te accedere, et in remedium salutis meæ recipere" ("De Imitat. Chr.," lib. iv. chap. iii.).

"Mais comme on peut manger cette chair, et boire ce sang en deux façons, réellement une fois le jour, et spirituellement

## CHAPTER XXI

*How to Communicate.*

**B**EGIN the evening before to prepare for the Holy Communion by aspirations and ejaculations of love,<sup>1</sup> going a little earlier to bed, that you may be able to rise a little earlier in the morning. If you wake in the night, fill your heart and your mouth at once with fragrant words, by means of which your soul may be perfumed to receive the Bridegroom. He is waking while you are sleeping, and preparing to bring you a thousand graces and favours if you on your part are disposed to receive them. Rise in the morning<sup>2</sup> with great joy, because of the happiness you hope for.

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à toute heure, qui sont deux manières de communier très-utiles et très-saintes, on doit pratiquer la seconde le plus souvent qu'il se peut, et la première toutes les fois qu'on en a la permission" ("Spiritual Combat," chap. liii.).

"Ne manquez jamais, pour ce commencement, de communier tous les premiers dimanches du mois, outre les bonnes fêtes" (Letter to the Abbess of Puy d'Orbe, May 1604).

<sup>1</sup> "Si vous voulez que le Sacrement de l'Eucharistie produire en vous des sentimens d'amour de Dieu, souvenez-vous de l'amour que Dieu a eu pour vous, et dès le soir qui précédera votre Communion, considérez que ce Seigneur . . . vous a laissé son Fils unique dans le Sacrement" ("Spiritual Combat," chap. lv.).

"Nous lui ouvrirons nos cœurs et nous tâcherons de l'y attirer par des oraisons jaculatoires, par des aspirations courtes, mais ardentes, telles que sont celles-ci : O viande celeste ! quand aurai-je le bonheur d'être tout entier à vous ?" ("Spiritual Combat," chap. lv.).

<sup>2</sup> "Arise early in the morning. 1. Give God thanks for the approach of so great a blessing. 2. Confess thy own unworthiness to admit so divine a guest. 3. Then remember and deplore thy sins which have made thee so unworthy" (Jeremy Taylor, "Holy Living," chap. iv. § 10).

When you have made your confession, go with all trust and yet with great humility to receive this heavenly food, which nourishes you unto immortality. And after you have said the sacred words ("Lord, I am not worthy"),<sup>1</sup> do not move your head or your lips any more, but open your mouth gently and moderately, raise your head so that the priest may see what he is doing, and receive with fulness of faith, of hope, and of charity, Him Whom, to Whom, through Whom, and for Whom you believe, you hope, you love.<sup>2</sup> O Philothea, consider that just as the bee, when it has gathered on the flowers the dew of heaven and the still more choice sweets of the earth, and made them into honey, carries it to the hive, so also the priest, when he has taken on the altar the Saviour of the world, the true Son of God, Who as dew has come down from heaven, the very Son of the Virgin, and Who as a flower has come forth from the earth of our humanity, places Him as the food of sweetness within your mouth and within your body. When you have received Him, stir up your heart to do homage to this King of salvation,<sup>3</sup> speak with Him of your inner life,

<sup>1</sup> St Matt. viii. 8, "Domine, non sum dignus." "Immediately before the receiving, say, Lord, I am not worthy, etc. Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly" (Jeremy Taylor, "Holy Living," chap. iv. § 10, Add.).

<sup>2</sup> "And after this, with joy and holy fear, and the forwardness of love, address thyself to the receiving of Him, to whom, and by whom, and for whom, all faiths and all hope and all love in the whole Catholick Church, both in heaven and earth is designed" (Jeremy Taylor, "Holy Living," chap. iv. § 10).

<sup>3</sup> "Quand vous aurez communie, entrez aussi tot dans un profond recueillement, et fermant la portie de votre cœur, ne pensez plus qu'à traiter avec votre Sauveur, en lui disant ces paroles, ou d'autres semblables : O souverain Maître du Ciel ! etc." ("Spiritual Combat," chap. lv.).

think of Him as within you, where He has been placed for your happiness. Indeed, welcome Him as heartily as you can, and behave yourself so as to recognise in your every action that God is with you.<sup>1</sup>

But when you cannot have the privilege of communicating actually at the holy Mass, at least communicate in heart and in spirit, uniting yourself by fervent desire to this life-giving Flesh of the Saviour.

Your chief intention in the Communion ought to be to improve, to strengthen, to console yourself in the love of God. For you ought to receive for love's sake what love alone gives you. No, the Saviour cannot be considered in any action more loving, more tender than in this, in which He brings Himself to nothing, so to speak, and reduces Himself to food, that He may enter our souls, and unite Himself closely to the heart and body of His faithful.<sup>2</sup>

If the worldly-minded ask you why you communicate so often, tell them that you do it that you may learn to love God, to purify yourself from your imperfections, to deliver yourself from your misery, to console yourself in your afflictions, to strengthen

<sup>1</sup> "Do not instantly upon your return from church, return also to the world, and secular thoughts and employments; but let the remaining part of that day be like a post-Communion or an after-office, entertaining your blessed Lord with all the caresses and sweetness of love and colloquies, and entercourses of duty and affection, acquainting Him with all your needs, and revealing to Him all your secrets, and opening all your infirmities" (Jeremy Taylor, "Holy Living," chap iv., § 10).

<sup>2</sup> "Then do as the angels do, who behold, and love, and wonder, that the Son of God should become food to the souls of His servants; that He who cannot suffer any change or lessening, should be broken into pieces, and enter into the body to support and nourish the spirit, and yet at the same time remain in heaven while He descends to thee upon earth" (Jeremy Taylor, "Holy Living," § 10).

yourself in your weakness. Tell them that two kinds of people should communicate frequently: the perfect, because, being well disposed, they would do great wrong if they did not draw near to the source and fountain of perfection; the imperfect, that they may be able rightly to reach out to perfection; the strong, that they may not become weak; the weak, that they may become strong; the sick, that they may be healed; the healthy, that they may not become sick;<sup>1</sup> and that for yourself, as being imperfect, weak, and sick, you have need of frequent communion with Him who is your perfection, your strength, your medicine. Tell them that those who have not much worldly business ought to communicate because they have need of it, and that he who works much, and has much anxiety, ought also to eat solid food and that frequently. Tell them that you receive the Holy Sacrament that you may learn to receive it well; for we can scarcely do an action well which we do not practise frequently.

Communicate frequently, Philothea, and as frequently as you can, with the advice of your spiritual father. Believe me, the hares become white in our mountains in winter because they see and eat nothing but the snow.<sup>2</sup> And by dint of adoring and eating beauty, goodness, and purity itself in this divine Sacrament, you will become altogether beautiful, altogether good, and altogether pure.

<sup>1</sup> This passage and the simile of the mountain hare are quoted at the end of Jeremy Taylor's chapter on "Receiving the Holy Sacrament," and in the edition of 1654 reference is made to "*L'Evesq. de Geneve: introd. à la vie dévote.*" The foregoing notes show the influence of St Francis on Jeremy Taylor throughout his chapter on the Blessed Sacrament.

<sup>2</sup> The simile is quoted by Jeremy Taylor.

# THE THIRD PART OF THE INTRODUCTION

CONTAINING

MANY COUNSELS REFERRING TO THE EXERCISE OF THE  
VIRTUES.

## CHAPTER I

*Of the Choice we ought to make as to the Exercise  
of the Virtues.*

THE King of the bees<sup>1</sup> never sets out to the fields unless he is surrounded by all his little people ;<sup>2</sup> and charity never enters a heart without bringing with it the whole train of other virtues, exercising them and setting them to work, as a captain does his soldiers. But it does not set them to work all at once or in the same degree, or at every time or in every place. The righteous is as a tree planted by the water-side, which brings forth his fruit in due season,<sup>3</sup> because charity, when it enters a soul, produces in it virtuous works according to the season. "Music, agreeable in itself, is unfitting in mourning,"<sup>4</sup> says the proverb.

<sup>1</sup> "Cum procedit rex apum, una est totum examen, circaque eum globatur" (Plin. "Hist. Nat.," xi. 17).

<sup>2</sup> "He had often, with Baloo's help, robbed bees' nests in single trees, and knew that the Little People hated the smell of wild garlic" ("Second Jungle Book," Red Dog).

<sup>3</sup> Ps. i. 3, "Et erit tanquam lignum, quod plantatum est secus decursus aquarum, quod fructum suum dabit in tempore suo."

<sup>4</sup> Ecclus. xxii. 6, "Musica in luctu importuna narratio."

It is a great fault in some, that when they undertake the exercise of any particular virtue, they obstinately resolve to produce its acts on every occasion, and wish like the ancient philosophers<sup>1</sup> either to weep always or to laugh always, and, worse still, blame and censure those who do not always exercise the same virtues as they do. We should "rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep," said the Apostle,<sup>2</sup> and charity is patient, kindly, liberal, prudent, condescending.<sup>3</sup>

But there are virtues which have almost a universal application, and which ought not only to produce their actions apart, but ought also to communicate their qualities to the action of all the other virtues. There are not frequent opportunities of practising fortitude, magnanimity, magnificence; but gentleness, temperance, honesty, and humility are virtues whose actions ought to colour our life. There are virtues more excellent than these; but the use of these is more needful. Sugar is more excellent than salt; but salt is more frequently and more generally useful. This is why we should always have a good and ready supply of these general virtues, since we make almost general use of them.

Among the exercises of the virtues we should prefer that which is more fitting to our duty and not that which is more fitting to our taste. It was the taste of St Paula to practise the asperity of bodily mortifica-

<sup>1</sup> "Democritus omnes deridebat et aiebat eos insanire; unde etiam gelasium, id est visorem, eum cives sui appellarunt. Dicunt Heraclitum omnia in communi vita deplorassee" ("Ælian. Var. Hist.," iv. 20; viii. 13).

<sup>2</sup> Rom. xii. 15, "Gaudere cum gaudentibus, flere eum flentibus."

<sup>3</sup> 1 Cor. xiii. 4, "Charitas patiens est, benigna est."

tions, that she might the more easily enjoy spiritual consolations ; but she owed a higher duty to obedience in her relation to her superiors. It is for this, St Jerome says, that she was to be blamed, because, against the advice of her bishop, she practised excessive abstinence.<sup>1</sup> The Apostles, on the contrary, who were commissioned to preach the gospel and distribute to souls the bread of heaven, were altogether right in their judgment that they would have done wrong to hinder themselves in this holy practice by exercising the virtue of the care of the poor, however excellent that virtue may be.<sup>2</sup> Every profession has need of the exercise of some special virtue : a bishop will practise one, a prince another, a soldier another ; a wife one, a widow another ; and although all ought to have every virtue, yet all ought not to practise them equally, but each one should specially devote himself to those which are needful for the state of life to which he is called.<sup>3</sup>

Among the virtues which do not call for our particular duty, we should prefer the most excellent and not the most showy. Comets<sup>4</sup> appear ordinarily to be larger than the stars, and to our eyes take up far more room ; yet they are in no way to be compared with the stars, either in size or in quality, and only appear larger because they are near us and are of a matter

<sup>1</sup> "Fateor, in hac re pertinacior fuit, ut sibi non parceret, et nulli cederet admonenti" (St Jer., "Epitaph. Paulæ," tom. iv. part ii. p. 682).

<sup>2</sup> Acts vi. 2, "Non est æquum nos derelinquere verbum Dei, et ministrare mensis."

<sup>3</sup> "To do my duty in that state of life unto which it shall please God to call me" (Catechism of the Church of England).

<sup>4</sup> Was this simile suggested by Halley's comet, which appeared in 1607, and has been identified with the comets of 1456, 1531, 1682, 1759, and 1835 ?

more gross in comparison with the stars. There are likewise certain virtues which, from being near to us, obvious, and, so to speak, material, are thought much of and are always preferred by the vulgar; thus temporal almsgiving is preferred to spiritual, sackcloth, fasting, nakedness, the discipline, and mortifications of the body to gentleness, kindness, modesty, and other mortifications of the heart, which, however, are the more excellent. Choose, then, Philothea, the best virtues and not the most valued, the most excellent and not the most showy, the best and not the bravest.

It is well that each should choose the special practice of some one virtue, not to abandon the others, but to keep the mind the more properly ordered and occupied. A beautiful young girl, more dazzling than the sun, adorned and robed in royal attire, and crowned with a crown of olives, appeared to St John, Bishop of Alexandria, and said to him: "I am the eldest daughter of the king; if you can have me for thy friend, I will lead thee to his presence." He knew that it was mercy towards the poor which God commended to him, so that afterwards he devoted himself so thoroughly to the practice of this virtue, that for this reason he is everywhere called St John the Almoner.<sup>1</sup> Eulogus of Alexandria, when

<sup>1</sup> St Joannes Eleemosynarius was made Bishop of Alexandria in 610. His life was written by Leontius, a contemporary. (Bar. Ann.). "Ego sum prima filiarum regis. Si me possederis amicam, ego te ducam in conspectu imperatoris. Etenim nemo habet potestatem super eum sicut ego. Ego quippe feci eum in terris hominem fieri et salvare homines" (St J. El. Vit.). When asked on one occasion whom he as Patriarch regarded as his masters: "Quos vos (dixit ille) pauperes et mendicos soletis appellare, eos ego dominos meos et adiutores nomino: nam ii soli mihi possunt opem ferre, ut a Christi regno non excidam" (Bar. Ann. 610, § ix.).

desirous of rendering some special service to God, and not having sufficient strength either to embrace the solitary life or to place himself under obedience to another, took into his own house a wretched creature, altogether lost and wasted with leprosy, that he might practise charity and mortification towards him. To do it the more worthily, he vowed to honour him, to entertain him, to serve him, as a page would serve his master and lord. Some temptation having arisen that one should leave the other, either on the part of Eulogus or on the part of the leper, they sought counsel of St Antony, who said to them, "Take care, my children, not to separate one from the other, for since you are both near the end, if the angel do not find you together, you will run the risk of losing your crowns."<sup>1</sup>

The King St Louis used to visit the hospitals as if for wages, and tended the sick with his own hands.<sup>2</sup> St Francis, above all things, loved poverty, which he called his Lady.<sup>3</sup> St Dominic loved preaching, from which his Order has taken its name.<sup>4</sup> St Gregory the Great took pleasure in embracing pilgrims, after

<sup>1</sup> An ancient bishop, named Eulogius, is mentioned by St Athanasius as a victim of the persecutions at Alexandria in 357. The narrative is derived from the "Hist. Lausiaca of Palladius of Helenopolis," c. 420 (Art. 26).

<sup>2</sup> "Frequens visebat ægrotos, quibus ipse non solum suis sumptibus omnia suppeditabat, sed etiam, quæ opus erant, manibus ministrabat" (Brev. Rom. Aug. 25 or 26).

<sup>3</sup> "Vir Dei paupertatem modo matrem, modo sponsam, modo dominam nominare solebat" (St Bon. Leg. S. Fr. Assis. chap. 7).

<sup>4</sup> "Quo in studio cum plurimum profecisset, prius oxomensis Ecclesiæ Canonicus regularis, deinde ordinis fratrum Prædicatorum auctor fuit" (Brev. Rom. Aug. 4).

the example of the great Abraham,<sup>1</sup> and like him received the King of Glory under the form of a pilgrim.<sup>2</sup> Tobias practised charity in burying the dead.<sup>3</sup> St Elizabeth, noble princess as she was, loved, above all things, the practice of self-humiliation.<sup>4</sup> St Catherine of Genoa, when she became a widow, dedicated herself to the service of the hospital.<sup>5</sup> Cassian speaks of a devout young lady who, being desirous of practising the virtue of patience, had recourse to St Athanasius. At her request he placed with her a poor widow, fretful, passionate, tiresome, insupportable in her character. She, by constantly worrying this devout girl, gave her a good subject on which to practise gentleness and condescension worthily.<sup>6</sup> Thus among the servants of God some devote themselves to the tending of the sick, others to the help of the poor; some to furthering the advance of Christian teaching amongst the young, others to gathering together souls who are lost and strayed; some to decorating the churches and adorning the altars, others to the promotion of peace and concord among men. In this they imitate the embroiderers, who work silk, and gold, and silver in great variety on different materials, and make of them all manner of flowers. Thus these

<sup>1</sup> Gen. xviii. 1-15; Heb. xiii. 2.

<sup>2</sup> "Gregorius ad mensam suam quotidie peregrinos quoslibet invitabat." . . . "Eadem nocte Dominus ei per visionem dixit: 'Cæteris diebus me in membris meis, hesterno autem die me in memetipso suscepisti'" (Joan. Diac. Vit. S. Greg. ii. 22).

<sup>3</sup> Tob. iv. 18, "Panem tuum et vinum tuum super sepulturam iusti constitue."

<sup>4</sup> Cp. part i. chap. iv. note.

<sup>5</sup> Cp. part i. chap. v. note.

<sup>6</sup> "Quæ scilicet vel iracunda, vel rixis, vel violentia, seu verbositate, atque etiam vanitate cunctas quibus hæc vitia dominantur, excederet" (Cass. Coll. xviii. 14).

pious souls who undertake the practice of any particular form of devotion make use of it as a groundwork for their spiritual embroidery. On it they work a variety of other virtues, keeping in this way their actions and affections the better united and ordered, by bringing them into relation to their principal exercise, and thus they show forth their spirit :—

“ In her choice vesture wrought of cloth of gold,  
Adorned with needlework of colours manifold.”<sup>1</sup>

When we are assaulted by some vice, we ought as far as possible to embrace the practice of the opposite virtue, referring the others to this.<sup>2</sup> For by this means we shall conquer our enemy, and shall not fail to progress in all virtues. If I am assaulted by pride or by anger, I must in everything lean and bend towards the side of humility and gentleness. And to

<sup>1</sup> Ps. xlv. 14, 15, “The king’s daughter is all glorious within, her clothing is of wrought gold. She shall be brought unto the king in raiment of needlework.”

The passage in the text is a fragment of French Psalmody:—

“ En son beau vestement de drap d’or recamé,  
Et d’ouvrages divers à l’esquille semé.”

The Old Version may be compared to this :—

“ The daughter of the king is glorious to behold,  
Within her closet she doth sit, all deck’t with beaten gold ;  
In robes well wrought with needle, and many a pleasant thing,  
With virgins faire on her to wayte, she cometh to the king.”

In the “*Traité de l’Amour de Dieu*,” St Francis frequently quotes the Psalms in the metrical version of Philippe des Portes, Abbé de Tiron, though sometimes allowing himself the privilege of modifying his translation. Cp. “*Traité*,” Preface.

<sup>2</sup> “*Enfin, pour orner votre âme des vertus et pour vous en faire de saintes habitudes, il faut produire beaucoup d’actes de celles qui sont contraires à vos passions déréglées*” (“*Combat Spir.*,” chap. xiii.).

do this I must give myself to the other exercises of prayer, sacraments, prudence, constancy, sobriety. For just as the wild boars, when they wish to sharpen their tusks, rub them and polish them with their other teeth, which thus in their turn become sharp and cutting, so the virtuous man, who has undertaken to perfect himself in the virtue of which he has the most need for his defence, ought to file it and sharpen it by the practice of other virtues which in their turn, by this action of sharpening, become themselves more excellent and better polished. Thus it happened to Job, who, by specially practising patience against the many temptations with which he was tried, became perfectly holy and virtuous in every kind of virtue.<sup>1</sup>

Thus it has happened, says St Gregory Nazianzen, that by the sole action of some virtue well and perfectly exercised, a person has attained to the summit of virtue, alleging Rahab, who having performed exactly the office of hospitality, attained to supreme glory.<sup>2</sup> This means that such action should be done with great zeal and charity.

## CHAPTER II

### *Continuation of the Same Discourse on the Choice of Virtues.*

SAINT AUGUSTINE well says that those who enter upon the practice of devotion commit certain faults which are to be blamed according to the

<sup>1</sup> St Jas. v. 11, "Sufferentiam Job audistis."

<sup>2</sup> "Pulchra res hospitalitas, ac testis . . . inter peccatores autem Raab meretrix, non tamen animi inductione meretrix, cui bene de hospitibus merendi studium, et laudis fuit et saluti" (St Greg. Naz. Orat. 16).

strictness of the laws of perfection, and yet praised for the promise they give of the future excellence of piety to which they serve as a preparation. The base and gross fear which gives birth to excessive scruples in the souls of those who have only lately come out of a course of sin is a virtue to be commended in this early stage, and has the sure promise of a future purity of conscience. But this same fear would be blamable in those who have made much progress, for in their hearts that love should reign which little by little drives out this kind of servile fear.<sup>1</sup>

St Bernard, in his early days, was full of rigour and asperity towards those who placed themselves under his guidance. He told them at the very first that they ought to forsake the body, and come to him with the spirit only. When he heard their confessions he hated every kind of fault, however small it was, and with such an extraordinary severity urged on these poor learners in perfection, that by driving them to it he withdrew them from it. For they lost heart and breath when they saw themselves thus urgently pressed up so straight and steep an ascent. You see, Philothea, it was the burning zeal of a perfect piety which provoked the great saint to adopt this method. This zeal was a great virtue, but yet a virtue which was none the less open to rebuke. So God Himself corrected him for it by means of a holy vision, spreading in his soul a spirit at once gentle, sweet, gracious, and tender, by means of which he became quite changed. He accused himself very much of having been so exacting and so stern, and was at last so gracious and condescending with every one that he

<sup>1</sup> "Pietas timore inchoatur, caritate perficitur" (St Aug., "Lib. de Vera Relig.," 33, tom. i. 758).

became all things to gain all men.<sup>1</sup> St Jerome tells us that St Paula, his dear daughter, was not only excessive but obstinate in the practice of bodily mortification. She would not even yield to the contrary advice which St Epiphanius, her bishop, had given her in this respect. More than this, she allowed herself to be so carried away with regret at the death of her friends, that she was herself always in danger of death. He concludes in this way: "It will be said that instead of writing the praises of this saint, I am writing accusations and reproaches. I call Jesus to witness, whom she served, and whom I desire to serve, that I lie neither on one side nor on the other, but set forth simply what I say of her as a Christian man of a Christian woman, that is to say, I write history, not panegyric, and that her vices are the virtues of others."<sup>2</sup> He means that the failures and faults of St Paula would hold the position of virtue in a soul less perfect. There are indeed actions which are

<sup>1</sup> "Adventantibus novitiis et festinantibus ingredi, audire Bernardum soliti sumus prædicantem et dicentem: 'Si ad ea quæ intus sunt festinatis, hic foris dimittite corpora quæ de seculo attulistis; soli spiritus ingrediantur, caro non prodest quicquam' ("Vita S. Bern.," i. 4). "Homines quos regere, et inter quos conversari veniebat, pæne omnes a se absterruit" (*id.* i. 6). "Nec tardavit misericordia Dei auxilium in tempore opportuno. . . . Vidit in visu noctis puerum caritate quadam divina adstantem sibi, et magna auctoritate præcipientem fiducialiter loqui quicquid ei suggereretur in apertione oris sui. . . . Apud auditores quoque ei gratiam addidit et auctoritatem, et intellectum super egenum et pauperem, peccatorem pœnitentem, et veniam postulantem" (*ib.* i. 6).

<sup>2</sup> Cp. chap. i. note; cp. also part i. chap. xxiv. note. "Testor Jesum cui illa servivit, et ego servire cupio, me utramque in partem nihil fingere, sed quasi Christianum de Christiana, quæ sunt vera, proferre, id est, historiam scribere non panegyricum: et illius vitia, aliorum esse virtutes" (St Jer., "Epitaph. Paulæ," tom. iv. part ii. p. 683).

regarded as imperfections among those who are perfect, which would nevertheless be considered as examples of great perfection among those who are imperfect. It is a good sign in a sick man, when the legs swell on his recovery from sickness, for it shows that nature, which is already strengthened, is rejecting superfluous humours. But this same sign would be bad in one who had not been ill, for it would show that nature had not sufficient strength to disperse and dissolve these humours. Dear Philothea, we should always have a good opinion of those in whom we see the practice of virtues, even though it be with imperfection, since even the saints have often practised them in this manner. But for ourselves, we should be careful to exercise them not only faithfully, but prudently. And to this end we ought strictly to observe the counsel of the wise man, never to lean on our own prudence, but on the prudence of those whom God has given us as directors.<sup>1</sup>

There are certain things which many regard as virtues which are not so in any wise. I must say a word to you of these. They are the ecstasies or raptures, the trances, seizures, transports, elevations, transformations, and other perfections of like nature<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Prov. iii. 5, "Ne innitaris prudentiæ tuæ."

<sup>2</sup> "Ce sont les extases ou ravissements, les insensibilitez, impassibilitez, unions deïfiques, elevations, transformations et autres telles perfections" (Text in De Sacy.).

St Francis is here referring to the experiences of the Catholic mystics as illustrated in the lives of St Teresa and St John of the Cross. The experiences correspond to the third and fourth degrees of prayer as described in the "Life of St Teresa." He describes the third degree, the "prayer of union," thus: "The understanding is utterly powerless here; the soul longs to send forth words of praise, but it has no control over itself—it is in a state of sweet restlessness. The joy is so great that the soul seems now and then to be on the

to which certain books refer, which promise to raise the soul to a contemplation purely intellectual, to the essential application of the spirit and a life of lofty eminence. Philothea, these perfections are not virtues; they are rather to be looked on as rewards which God gives to virtue, or still more as samples of the happiness of the future life which are sometimes shown to men that they may have a desire for the work as a whole which is in Paradise above. But for all that, we ought not to pretend to such gifts,<sup>1</sup> since they are in no way necessary to the due service and love of God which ought to be our only aim. Indeed, they are not very

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very point of going forth out of the body." The fourth degree of prayer is rapture or ecstatic trance. "There is no sense of anything, only fruition. . . . There is no power in the body, and the soul has none whereby this fruition can be made known. . . . The senses are of no use whatever, except to hinder the soul's fruition; and so they rather hurt it" ("Life of St Teresa," Anon., pp. 79, 84).

"Beatrix of Jesus, one of the sisters, went to the parlour on Trinity Sunday with a message for the prioress. To her great amazement, she saw St Teresa raised in the air, unconscious of her presence. She withdrew and called the nuns in, who all became witnesses of the same marvel. On the other side of the grating they saw St John of the Cross, also raised above the ground in the same way. The mystery was explained to them afterwards. The two saints had begun by speaking of the most blessed Trinity, and had fallen in a trance together" ("Life of St John of the Cross," Lewis, pp. 73, 74).

<sup>1</sup> "The other extraordinary, which comprehends other forms of prayer more supernatural and special, which we call prayer of quiet or silence, with suspension, ecstasy, or rapture, and with imaginary figures of truths which are discovered, or with only an intellectual light of them, together with revelations and interior speeches. . . . Such sorts of prayer are not to be desired nor attempted by ourselves upon pain of being proud and presumptuous" (Da Ponte, "Med.," *Intr. on Mental Prayer*, chap. xi.).

often gifts which can be gained by work and industry, since they are rather passions than actions which we may receive, but not work out in ourselves. I add that we have only undertaken to make ourselves good men, devout men, pious men, pious women; this is why we must employ ourselves to this end. If it please God to raise us to these angelic perfections, we shall also be good angels. But meanwhile, let us exercise ourselves simply, humbly, devoutly in the little virtues,<sup>1</sup> the conquest of which our Saviour has committed to our care and labour, virtues such as patience, kindness, mortification of heart, humility, obedience, purity, chastity, tenderness to our neighbours, tolerance of their imperfections, diligence, and holy zeal. Let us willingly leave the lofty eminences to souls who are raised aloft. We do not merit so high a rank in the service of God. We shall be only too happy to serve Him in His kitchen, His pantry, to be His footmen, His porters, His pages. It is for Him, afterwards, if it seem good to Him, to receive us into His cabinet and privy council. Yes, Philothea, for this King of Glory does not reward His servants according to the dignity of the duties which they practise, but according to the love and humility with which they practise them. Saul, when seeking his father's asses, found the kingdom of Israel.<sup>2</sup> Rebecca, watering the camels

<sup>1</sup> St Matt. xxv. 21, "Euge, serve bone, et fidelis, quia super pauca fuisti fidelis, super multa te constituam; intra in gaudium domini tui."

<sup>2</sup> 1 Kings (1 Sam.) ix. 3, "Et dixit Cis ad Saul filium suum: Tolle tecum unum de pueris, et consurgens vade, et quære asinas"; ix. 10, "Et ierunt in civitatem, in qua erat vir Dei"; ix. 17, "Cumque aspexisset Samuel Saulem, Dominus dixit ei: Ecce vir quem dixeram tibi, iste dominabitur populo meo."

of Abraham, became the bride of his son.<sup>1</sup> Ruth, gleaning after the reapers of Boaz, and sleeping at his feet, was drawn to his side and made his bride.<sup>2</sup> Indeed, such high and lofty pretensions to things extraordinary are largely subject to illusion, deceit, falsehood.<sup>3</sup> And it happens sometimes that those who think themselves angels are not even good men. In fact, there is more nobleness in the words and the terms which they use than in their thought and their work. We must not, however, despise or censure anything rashly; but in blessing God for the lofty eminence of others, let us stay humbly on our lower path, lower but surer, more excellent, more suitable to our insufficiency and our littleness. If in this we walk humbly and faithfully, God will raise us to more lofty heights.

### CHAPTER III

#### *Of Patience.*

“YE have need of patience, that after ye have done the will of God ye may receive the promise,” says the Apostle.<sup>4</sup> Yes, for as the Saviour had said,

<sup>1</sup> Gen. xxiv. 20, “Effundensque hydriam in canalibus recurrit ad puteum ut hauriret aquam: et haustam omnibus camelis dedit”; v. 51, “En Rebecca coram te est, tolle eam et proficiscere, et sit uxor filii domini tui, sicut locutus es Dominus.”

<sup>2</sup> Ruth ii. 3, “Abiit itaque et colligebat spicas post terga metentium”; iii. 7, “Venit abscondite, et discooperto pallio a pedibus ejus, se projecit”; iv. 13, “Tulit itaque Booz Ruth, et accepit uxorem.”

<sup>3</sup> St Teresa prayed much to be delivered from delusion (“Life of St Teresa,” p. 127).

<sup>4</sup> Heb. x. 36, “Patientia enim vobis necessaria est: ut voluntatem Dei facientes, reporteris promissionem.”

"In your patience ye shall possess your souls."<sup>1</sup> To possess the soul is the great happiness of man, Philothea, and the more perfect our patience the more perfectly we possess our souls. Remember again and again that our Saviour has saved us by His suffering and endurance,<sup>2</sup> and that we likewise should work out our salvation by sufferings and affliction, enduring injury, contradiction, and displeasure with as much gentleness as possible.

Do not in any way limit your patience to such or such kinds of injury and affliction, but extend it generally to all which God will send you and permit to reach you. There are some who only wish to suffer the trials which are honourable, as, for example, to be wounded in war, to be prisoners of war, to be ill-treated for the sake of Religion, to be impoverished in some quarrel in which they gained the mastery. These do not love the trial, but the honour which it brings. The true sufferer and servant of God bears equally the trials which are combined with ignominy and those which are honourable. To be scorned, reprov'd, and accused by the wicked is only a delight to a man of courage; but to be reprov'd, accused, and maltreated by good men, by friends, by relatives, it is in this that good is at stake. I hold at a higher value the gentleness with which the great St Carlo Borromeo suffered for a long while the public attacks which a great preacher of a much-reformed Order made against him in the pulpit than all the attacks which he

<sup>1</sup> St Luke xxi. 19, "In patientia vestra possidebitis animas vestras."

<sup>2</sup> Heb. xii. 3, "Recogitate enim eum, qui talem sustinuit a peccatoribus adversum semetipsum contradictionem ne fatigemini animis vestris deficientes."

received from others.<sup>1</sup> For just as the sting of the bee is sharper than that of the fly, so the wrong we receive from good men and the obstacles they offer are far more unbearable than the others. And it sometimes happens that two good men with the best intention foster great persecution and opposition one against the other because of the difference of their opinions.

Be patient, not only with respect to the burden and principal of the afflictions which come upon you, but also with respect to the details and accidents which arise from them. Many indeed would wish to bear the burden of evil, provided they were in no way troubled by it. "I should not," one says, "fret at all at becoming poor, if only it would not hinder me from helping my friends, bringing up my children, and living honourably as I desire." And another will say, "I should not care at all if the world would not think that it has happened by my own fault." Another would be quite indifferent if any one slandered him, provided that no one would believe the slanderer. There are others who are willing to bear, it would seem, some inconvenience from evil, but not to bear all; they are not impatient, they say, at being ill, but at having no money to be cured, or at being a burden to those who are about them. Now, I say, Philothea, that we must have patience, not only to be ill, but to be ill with the illness which God wishes, in the place where He wishes, and amongst the

<sup>1</sup> The word "Humilitas" forms one of the quarterings in the arms of St Carlo Borromeo (Ughelli, "*Italia Sacra*," tom. v. p. 395). An attempt was made on his life on Oct. 26, 1569, by Girolamo Donati, a priest of the Order of the Frati Umiliati, who shot at him at midnight in the oratory of the Archbishop's Palace (Muratori, "*Annal. Ital.*," ann. 1569).

persons whom He wishes, and with the inconvenience which He wishes. And so also with other visitations. When evil comes to you, resist it with such remedies as are possible, and according to God's will. For to do otherwise would be to tempt His divine Majesty. But also, when this is done, await with complete resignation the result which God allows. If it be pleasing to Him that the remedies overcome the evil, you will thank Him with humility. But if it please Him that the evil has the better of the remedies, bless Him with patience.

I follow the advice of St Gregory. When you are accused justly of some fault which you have committed, humble yourself thoroughly, confess that you merit the accusation which has been brought against you.<sup>1</sup> If the accusation is false, excuse yourself gently, denying your fault, for you owe this respect to truth and to the edification of your neighbour. But if, after your true and lawful excuse, you are still accused, do not trouble yourself at all, and do not try to press your excuse; for after having done your duty to truth, you ought to do it also to humility. And in this way you will neither harm the care which you ought to have of your reputation, nor the affection which you owe to peace, gentleness of heart, and humility.

Complain as little as possible of the wrong which has been done you, for as a rule it is certain that he who complains commits sin, inasmuch as self-love always makes us think the injuries greater than they are. But above all, never complain to persons who are ready to be indignant and to think evil. If it

<sup>1</sup> "Sommopere curandum est ut mala quæ fecimus aliis arguentibus non negemus" (St Greg., lib. xxii. in Job, n. 33).

is expedient to complain to any one, either to remedy the offence or to quiet your spirit, you should do it to souls who are calm and who love God. For otherwise, in place of soothing your heart, they will provoke it to greater restlessness. In place of removing the thorn which pricks you, they will fix it further in your foot.

Many, when they are sick, afflicted, and offended with anyone, forbear complaining and showing weakness. For this in their opinion (and it is true) would be clear witness of a great failure of strength and generosity. But they have an extreme desire, and seek for many artifices to give it effect, that every one may pity them and have compassion for them, and think them not only afflicted but patient and courageous. Now, this is indeed patience, but a false patience, and is in fact nothing else than a very delicate and fine ambition and vanity. "They have glory," says the Apostle, "but not before God."<sup>1</sup> The true sufferer does not complain at all of his evil, nor does he desire that any should pity him: he speaks of it simply, plainly, sincerely, without bewailing himself, without complaining, without exaggerating it. If any pity him, he bears it patiently, unless it be for some evil which he does not suffer; for then he declares modestly that he has not this evil, and remains in this way at peace between truth and patience, bearing his evil and not complaining of it.

In the contradictions which will come to you in the exercise of devotion (for these will not be wanting), remember the word of God: "The woman whilst she is in travail has great pains, but when she sees her child born, she forgets them, inasmuch as a man is

<sup>1</sup> Rom. iv. 2, "Habet gloriam, sed non apud Deum."

born into the world.”<sup>1</sup> But you have conceived in your soul the most worthy Child in the world, who is Jesus Christ. Before He is brought to the birth, it cannot but be that you will feel the labour. But be of good courage; for when these pains are passed, eternal joy will rest with you for having given birth to such a Man in the world. Now He will be entirely born for you when you have entirely formed Him in your heart and in your works by the imitation of His life.

When you are ill, offer all your grief, pain, and weakness to the service of our Saviour, and pray Him to join them to the torments which He has endured for you. Obey the doctor, take the medicines, food, and other remedies for the love of God, remembering the gall which He took for love of us.<sup>2</sup> Desire to be healed to render Him service. Do not refuse to languish that you may obey Him, and prepare to die if that it please Him that you may praise Him and rejoice in Him. Remember that the bees, at the time when they make their honey, live and eat of a very bitter food, and that we are never able to do acts of great gentleness and patience, nor to compose the honey of excellent virtues better than when we are eating the bread of bitterness and living in the midst of pain. And as honey made from the flowers of the thyme, a small and bitter herb, is the best of all, so virtue exercised in the bitterness of the vilest, basest, and most abject tribulation is the most excellent of all.

<sup>1</sup> St John xvi. 21, “Mulier cum parit tristitiam habet, quia venit hora ejus: cum autem pepererit puerum jam non meminit pressuræ propter gaudium, quia natus est homo in mundum.”

<sup>2</sup> St Matt. xxvii. 34, “Et dederunt ei vinum bibere cum felle mistam.”

Look often with your inner eyes on Jesus Christ crucified, naked, blasphemed, slandered, forsaken, and at last overwhelmed with every kind of grief, of sadness, of labour, and consider that none of your sufferings, either in quality or in quantity, are to be compared with His, and that you will never suffer anything for Him in comparison with what He has suffered for you.<sup>1</sup>

Consider the pains which the martyrs suffered of old, and those which so many persons bear, heavier beyond all proportion than those in which you are; and say: "Alas! my labours are consolations and my troubles roses in comparison with those who, without help, without assistance, without alleviation live a continual death, overwhelmed with afflictions infinitely greater than mine."

#### CHAPTER IV

##### *Of Humility as to Outward Things.*

"**BORROW**," said Elisha to a poor widow, "and take an abundance of empty vessels, and pour oil into them."<sup>2</sup> To receive the grace of God in our hearts we must have them free of our own glory. The kestrel, by its cries and keen look, frightens the birds of prey by a secret power of its own. This is why the doves love it above all other birds, and live with assurance near to it. Thus humility drives away Satan, and preserves in us the graces and gifts of the Holy Ghost. And for this reason all the saints, and

<sup>1</sup> "Tota vita Christi, crux fuit et martyrism, et tu tibi quæris requiem et gaudium?" ("De Imit. Chr.," ii. 12).

<sup>2</sup> 4 Kings (2 Kings) iv. 3, 4, "Vade, pete mutuo ab omnibus vicinis tuis vasa vacua non pauca . . . et mitte inde in omnia vasa hæc."

particularly the King of Saints and His Mother, have always honoured and cherished this virtue above all other moral virtues.

We call the glory vain which we give ourselves, either for that which is not in us, or for that which is in us but is not ours, or for that which is in us and is ours and yet does not merit the glory we give it. The nobility of our family, the favour of the great, popular esteem—these are things which are not in us, but are either in our predecessors or in the opinion of others.<sup>1</sup> There are some who show themselves proud and haughty because they ride a good horse, because they have a feather in their hat, because they are dressed handsomely. But who does not see the folly of it?<sup>2</sup> For if there is glory on this account, it is for the horse, for the bird, and for the tailor. And what a slackness of courage it is to borrow their reputation from a horse, a feather, a ruff? Others think much of themselves on account of their curled moustaches, a well-combed beard, crisped hair, soft hands, or for their knowledge of dancing, playing, singing. But are they not lacking in courage in wishing to raise their value and give an increase to their reputation by things so frivolous and wanton? Others for a little knowledge desire to be honoured and respected in the

<sup>1</sup> “He that is proud of his birth is proud of the blessings of others, not of himself: for if his parents were more eminent in any circumstance than their Neighbours, he is to thank God, and to rejoice in them.” . . . “Whatever other difference there is between thee and thy Neighbour, if it be bad, it is thine own. . . . If it be good, thou hast received it from God” (Jer. Taylor, “Holy Living,” chap. ii. § 4).

<sup>2</sup> “He that is proud of riches is a fool. For if he be exalted above his Neighbours because he hath more gold, how much inferiour is he to a Gold Mine? How much is he to give place to a chain of Pearl, or a knot of Diamonds?” (Jeremy Taylor, *ibid.*).

world, as if every one ought to go to school with them and regard them as their masters.<sup>1</sup> This is why they are called pedants. Others pride themselves on their beauty, and believe that all the world is in love with them. All this is extremely vain, silly, and impertinent; and the glory which is derived from such feeble subjects is called vain, silly, and frivolous.

That which is really good is known like real balm. Balm is tested by dropping it into water. If it goes to the bottom and takes the lowest place it is adjudged the finest and most precious.<sup>2</sup> Thus to know if a man is really wise, learned, generous, noble, we must see if his good qualities tend to humility, modesty, and submission, for then they will be really good; but if they float and wish to be prominent, they will be qualities the less genuine that they are the more apparent. Pearls which are produced and nourished in the wind and in the noise of the thunder have only the covering of pearl and are void of substance; and so the virtues and good qualities of men who are received and nourished in pride, in boasting, and in vanity have only a simple appearance of good, without sap, without moisture, and without solidity.

Honours, rank, dignities are like the saffron, which does better and grows more abundantly when trampled under foot. It is no longer an honour to be beautiful when we consider ourselves so. Beauty ought to be neglected to be in good grace. Knowledge dishonours us when it puffs us up and degenerates into pedantry.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> "Our learning is then best when it teaches most humility: but to be proud of Learning is the greatest ignorance in the world" (Jeremy Taylor, *ibid.*).

<sup>2</sup> "Balsami sinceri densatur in tepida aqua gutta sidens ad ima vasa; adulterata olei modo innatat" (Plin. Hist. Nat. xii. 54).

<sup>3</sup> 1 Cor. viii. 1, "Scientia inflat, charitas vero ædificat."

If we are punctilious as to rank, as to precedence, as to title, besides exposing our quality to examination, to inquiry, and to contradiction, we render ourselves vile and abject. For the honour which is beautiful when received as a gift becomes base when it is exacted, sought for, demanded. When the peacock spreads his tail in his pride, while lifting up its beautiful feathers, he ruffles up all the rest of his body, and from one part to the other shows up all his deformities. Flowers which are well planted in the soil wither when they are handled; and as those who smell the mandrake<sup>1</sup> from afar or while merely passing by enjoy much of its sweetness, but those who smell it close at hand and for a long while become drowsy and sick, so honours bring pleasant consolation to the person who faintly smells them afar off without minding them or being eager about them; but to one who is attached to them and feasts upon them they are extremely blameworthy and reprehensible.

The pursuit and love of virtue begins by making us virtuous, but the pursuit and love of honours begins by making us liable to contempt and blame. Those who are well born do not concern themselves with these small trifles of rank, of honour, of salutations; they have other things to do. But it is the special weakness of idle spirits. He who can have pearls does not burden himself with shells, and those who pretend to virtue are not at all eager after honours. Indeed, each one can enter upon his own rank of life and keep it without violence to humility, provided that he does it

<sup>1</sup> Of the Mandragora or Mandrake, Gerarde says:—It bears "round apples of a yellowish colour, smooth, soft, and glittering, of a strong smell" (Herball, p. 280). "The smell of the apples mooveth to sleepe" (p. 282). It is a plant of the order Solanaceæ, and is closely allied to the Henbane and Deadly Nightshade.

easily and without strife. For as those who come from Peru, besides the gold and silver they fetch from there bring also apes and parrots, because they cost scarcely anything and do not overload the ship, so those who aim at virtue do not neglect to receive the rank and honour due to them, provided always that it costs little care and attention, and that it may be enjoyed without being loaded with trouble, anxiety, dispute, and strife. I do not, however, speak of those whose dignity is a matter of public concern, nor of certain special occasions which are of great consequence; for in this each one should preserve what belongs to him with a prudence and devotion which should be accompanied with charity and courtesy.<sup>1</sup>

## CHAPTER V

### *Of Mere Inward Humility.*

**BUT** you desire, Philothea, that I should conduct you further forward in humility. For to do as I have said is prudence rather than humility. Now, therefore, I pass on further. Many have no wish nor do they even dare to think of and ponder over the graces which God especially gives to them for fear of falling into vain glory and complacency; but in this they deceive themselves. For since, as the great Angelic Doctor says, the true means of attaining to the love of God is the consideration of His benefits,<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> "Be reverent, modest, and reserved in the presence of thy betters, giving to all according to their quality their titles of honour" (Jeremy Taylor, *ibid.*).

<sup>2</sup> "Per beneficia a Deo suscepta disponimur ad hoc quod in Dei dilectione proficiamus" (St Thom. Sum. 2a, 2ae qu. 27, a. 3).

the more we know them the more we shall love Him. And as His special benefits move us more strongly than the common ones, so ought they to be considered more attentively. Indeed, nothing can so humble us before the mercy of God as the multitude of His benefits, nor can anything humble us more before His justice than the multitude of our misdeeds. Let us consider what He has done on our behalf and what we have done against Him; and as we consider our sins minutely, let us also consider His favours minutely. We must not be afraid that the knowledge of what He has done for us will puff us up, provided we are attentive to this fact, that what is good in us is not of us.<sup>1</sup> Alas! do mules cease to be heavy beasts and offensive in smell because they are loaded with the precious furniture and perfume of the prince? "What have we of good that we have not received, and if we have received it, why do we wish to be proud of it?"<sup>2</sup> On the contrary, the lively consideration of favours received makes us humble, for knowledge engenders acknowledgment.<sup>3</sup> But if, when we see the favours which God has shown us, vanity of any kind should come and flatter us, the unfailing remedy will be to have recourse to the consideration of our ingratitude,

<sup>1</sup> "Toutes ces considérations doivent vous donner de jour en jour un plus grand mépris de vous-même, et vous faire reconnoître les obligations infinies que vous avez à la divine Bonté bien loin de lui dérober la gloire qui lui est due" ("Combat Spir.," chap. xxxii.).

<sup>2</sup> 1 Cor. iv. 7, "Quid autem habes quod non accepisti? Si autem accepisti, quid gloriaris quasi non acceperis?"

<sup>3</sup> "Car la connoissance engendre la reconnoissance" (De Sacy's text).

"Humiliez-vous de la sorte: rendez à Dieu ce qui est à Dieu; vous vous défendrez par-là de la vanité et mériterez de jour en jour de plus grandes grâces" ("Combat Spir.," chap. xxxii.).

our imperfections, our wretchedness. If we think of what we have done when God has not been with us, we shall know well that what we do when He is with us is neither of our own making nor of our invention. We shall indeed have joy in it and rejoice in it, because we have it; but we shall glorify God alone for it, because He is the Author of it.<sup>1</sup>

Thus the holy Virgin confesses that God has done great things for her, but it is only to humble herself and magnify God. "My soul," she said, "doth magnify the Lord, for He hath done for me great things."<sup>2</sup>

We say many a time that we are nothing, that we are the very offscouring and refuse of the world.<sup>3</sup> But we should be much troubled if we were taken at our word, and if we were spoken of publicly as we speak of ourselves. On the contrary, we make a pretence of flying and hiding ourselves that men may run after us and seek us out.<sup>4</sup> We make a parade of wishing to be last and seated at the lowest end of the table, but it is that we may pass more advantageously to the top. True humility makes no pretence of what it is, and scarcely ever utters the language of humility. For it does not wish to hide only the

<sup>1</sup> "Seigneur, ne permettez pas que je vous dérobe votre gloire, en attribuant à mes propres forces ce qui n'est qu'un pur effet de votre grâce. Qu'à vous soit l'honneur et la louange, et à moi l'opprobre et la confusion" ("Combat Spir.," chap. xxxii.).

<sup>2</sup> St Luke i. 46, 49, "Magnificat anima mea Dominum. . . . Quia fecit mihi magna."

<sup>3</sup> Lam. iii. 45, "Eradicationem et abjectionem posuisti me in medio populeram."

<sup>4</sup> "Use no stratagems and devices to get praise. Some use to enquire into the faults of their own actions and discourses or profess to hear that it was well done or spoken, and without fault" (Jeremy Taylor, *ibid.*).

other virtues; it desires chiefly to hide itself. And if it were lawful to lie, to feign, or to offend a neighbour, it would perform actions of arrogance and pride that it might conceal itself under them and leave them altogether unknown and hidden.<sup>1</sup> This, then, is my advice, Philothea. Either do not use the language of humility, or use it only with a genuine inner feeling, in conformity with what you speak openly. Do not ever let us lower our eyes without humbling our hearts. Do not let us make a show of wishing to be last unless we heartily wish it. Now, I hold this to be a rule so general that I do not bring forward any exception. I only add that politeness requires that we sometimes give the preference to those who clearly will not take it; and yet this is neither duplicity nor false humility, for the offer only of preference is a beginning of honour. And since we cannot give it them wholly, we do no harm in giving them the beginnings of it. In the same way I use some words of honour and respect, which strictly do not seem genuine. But yet they are sufficiently so, provided that the heart of him who uses them has a genuine intention of honouring and respecting him for whom they are spoken. For although the words mean more than what we say, yet we do no harm in using them when common usage requires it. Yet it is true that I could wish that words were fitted to our affections as much as possible, that in everything and everywhere we could follow a hearty sincerity and candour. A man who is really humble

<sup>1</sup> St Philip Neri would often remain in his room to receive visitors with a pair of white shoes on his feet, a tiny beretta on his head, and a red skirt over his waistcoat, reaching below his knees; and in this costume he received all who came, even though they might be persons of rank or importance, in the hope of earning their contempt (Bacci's "St Phil. Neri," by Faber, p. 254).

would prefer that another should say of him that he was wretched, that he was nothing, that he was of no worth, than to say it himself. At least, if he knew that any one was saying it, he would not contradict it, but heartily acquiesce. For believing it firmly, he would be glad that any one should follow his opinion. Many say that they leave mental prayer for the perfect, and that they themselves are not worthy of practising it. Others declare that they dare not often communicate, because they do not feel themselves sufficiently pure; others that they fear to disgrace devotion if they take part in it, because of their great misery and weakness. And others refuse to use their talent for the service of God and of their neighbour, because they say they know their feebleness, and that they are afraid of being puffed up if they are instruments of doing any good, and that in enlightening others they would consume themselves. All this is mere artifice, and a kind of humility which is not only false but malign, by which they wish silently and subtly to find fault with the things of God, or at least cover with a pretext of humility the self-love of their own opinion, of their temper, and of their idleness.

“Ask of God a sign in heaven above, or below in the deep of the sea,” said the Prophet to the unhappy Ahab,<sup>1</sup> and he replied: “No, I will not ask, neither will I tempt the Lord.” Wretched man! he makes a pretence of showing great reverence to God, and under colour of humility excuses himself of aspiring to the grace which His divine goodness had offered to him. But does he not see that when God wishes

<sup>1</sup> “Achab,” De Sacy; “Achaz,” Migne. Isa. vii. 11, 12. “Pete tibi signum a Domino Deo tuo in profundum inferri sive in excelsum supra. Et dixit Achaz: Non petam, et non tentabo Dominum.”

to show us favour, it is pride to refuse ; that the gifts of God oblige us to receive them, and that it is humility to obey and to follow His desires as closely as possible ? Now, the desire of God is that we should be perfect, uniting ourselves to Him, and imitating Him as closely as possible. The proud man who confides in himself has indeed reason for not daring to undertake anything ; but the humble man is the more courageous, the more powerless he knows himself to be ; and as he thinks himself poor-spirited, he becomes the bolder because he has all his trust in God, who is pleased to magnify His almighty power in our infirmity, and to raise up His mercy upon our misery. We should therefore dare to do humbly and holily all that is judged fitting for our progress by those who direct our souls.

To think that we know what we do not know is clear folly. To wish to act the part of knowing what we well recognise that we do not know is insupportable vanity. For my own part, I should not like even to play the part of knowing what I did know, nor, on the contrary, should I wish to play the part of one who was ignorant of it. When charity requires it, we must communicate frankly and gently with our neighbour, not only that which is necessary for his instruction, but also that which is useful to him for his consolation. For the humility which hides and covers virtues that it may keep them, makes them appear when charity commands it, that it may increase them, enlarge them, and perfect them. And in this it resembles that tree in the isles of Tylos,<sup>1</sup> which at night shuts up and

<sup>1</sup> “ In Tylo insula quæ est in sinu arabico est quædam arbor foliosa rosæ modo florisque rosei. Hunc noctu comprimi, solis exortu aperiri, meridie in plenum expandi, vesperi iterum colligi paulatim, noctuque concludi, incolæ eum dormire tunc dicere assolent ” (“ Theoph. Hist. plant.,” iv. 9).

closes its beautiful red flowers, and only opens them at sunrise, so that the inhabitants of the land say that these flowers sleep during the night. For thus humility covers and hides all our virtues and human perfections, and never lets them appear except for the sake of charity, which, being a virtue in no way human but heavenly, in no way moral but divine, is the true Sun of the virtues, over which it always rules. So that humility which is prejudicial to charity is most certainly false.

I should wish neither to play the fool nor to play the wise man. For if humility prevents me from playing the wise man, sincerity and frankness will prevent me also from playing the fool.<sup>1</sup> And if vanity is contrary to humility, artifice, affectation, and dissembling are contrary to frankness and sincerity. If some great servants of God have made a show of being foolish to render themselves more contemptible before the world, we must admire them, but not imitate them ;<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> "St Philip Neri once hit upon another device to draw upon himself ridicule and contempt ; he had his beard cut on one side only, and went out with half a beard, jumping and dancing as if he had gained some triumph." "He frequently went out, accompanied by his penitents, carrying in his hand a huge nosegay of broom flowers, which he smelt at every now and then." "He began once on the first of August to jump in the square of St Pietro in Vincula at Rome, when a large crowd was collected. Some one was heard to say, 'Look at that old fool there,' and thus Philip gained what he so much desired, to be thought a man of little sense" ("Life of St Philip Neri," pp. 250-54).

<sup>2</sup> There is little doubt that St Francis in this statement passes a gentle censure on the system of mortification practised by St Philip Neri, and it is significant that he does not mention him by name in the "Introduction."

"Ce n'était pas sa coutume de dire des paroles d'humilité, parlant de soi ; il les fuyait comme des écueils où l'humilité même faisait naufrage" ("L'Esprit," part ii. § 13).

for they have had reasons for giving way to this excess which have been so peculiarly and extraordinarily their own that no one ought to draw any consequence from them for himself. And as to David,<sup>1</sup> he danced and leapt before the Ark of the Covenant a little more than ordinary decency exacted. It was not that he wished to play the fool, but quite simply and frankly he made these external movements suitable to the extraordinary and unmeasured gladness in his heart. It is true that when Michal his wife reproached him for it, as for a folly, he was not displeased at seeing himself abused, but persevering in the simple and genuine representation of his joy, he witnesses that he is quite content to receive a little abuse for his God. And to sum up, I will tell you that if for actions of a true and simple devotion you are thought vile, contemptible, or foolish, humility will make you rejoice in this happy abuse, the cause of which is not in you but in those who use it.

## CHAPTER VI

*That Humility makes us love our own Humiliation.*<sup>2</sup>

I GO on further, and tell you, Philothea, that in all things you should love your own humiliation. But you will say, What do you mean when you say, Love

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“ Il disait que la vraie humilité est comme le bon or qui a le son fort bas ; ou plutôt qu'elle était muette comme un poisson ” (“ L'Esprit,” part ii. § 30).

<sup>1</sup> 2 Kings (2 Sam.) vi. 16, “ Vidit regem David subsilientem atque saltantem coram Domino ; et despexit eum in corde suo.”

<sup>2</sup> “ Abjection.” The translation “ humiliation ” is based on the usage of Jeremy Taylor. “ There are some actions which are usually reckoned as parts of our religion, which

your own humiliation? In Latin humiliation means humility, and humility means humiliation; <sup>1</sup> so that when our Lady in her sacred Canticle says that because our Lord has seen the humility of His servant, all generations shall call her blessed, <sup>2</sup> she means that our Lord has heartily looked at her humiliation, lowliness, and baseness to load her with graces and favours. There is, however, a difference between the virtue of humility and humiliation. For humiliation is the littleness, baseness, and lowliness which is within us without our thinking of it. But as to the virtue of humility, it is the genuine knowledge and voluntary acknowledgment of our humiliation. Now the chief point of this humility lies in not only voluntarily acknowledging our humiliation, but in loving it and delighting in it, not at all for lack of courage and generosity, but to exalt as much as possible God's majesty, and to think much more of our neighbour than of ourselves. And it is this to which I exhort you; and the better to understand it, know that among the ills we suffer, some are humiliating, some are honourable. Many comply with the honourable, but scarcely any one wishes to comply with the humiliating. Look at a devout hermit, tattered and shivering: every one honours his rags out of compassion for his suffering. But if a poor workman, a poor gentleman, a poor young lady is in the same state, they are despised, they are marked out, and

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yet of themselves are so relative and imperfect, that without the purity of intention they degenerate. . . . Thus alms are for charity; fasting for temperance; humiliation is for humility" (Jeremy Taylor, "Holy Living," chap. i. § 2).

<sup>1</sup> "Abjection veut dire humilité, et humilité veut dire abjection."

<sup>2</sup> St Luke i. 48, "Quia vespexit humilitatem ancillæ suæ; ecce enim ex hoc beatam me dicent omnes generationes."

thus their poverty is humiliating. A religious receives devoutly a harsh censure from his superior, or a child from his father. Each of them will call it mortification, obedience, and prudence. A knight and a lady will suffer something of the same sort from a person, and though it be for the love of God, every one will call it cowardice and timidity. Look again then at another humiliating evil. One man has a cancer in his arm, another in his face. The former has only the sore, the latter, together with the sore, has the scorn, the disdain, the humiliation. Now, I say, we must not only love the evil, which we may do by the virtue of patience, but we must also cherish the humiliation, which we do by the virtue of humility. Moreover, there are humiliating virtues and honourable virtues. Patience, gentleness, simplicity, and humility itself are virtues which the worldly-minded regard as mean and humiliating. On the contrary, they set a high value on prudence, valour, and liberality. There are also actions of the same virtue, of which some are despised and others honoured. To give alms and to pardon offences are two actions of Charity; the former is honoured by every one, the other is despised in the eyes of the world. A young gentleman or a young lady who will not fall in with the excesses of a debauched set, and swear, play, dance, drink, dress with them, will be taunted and censured by the others, and their modesty will be called hypocrisy or affectation. To love this is to love humiliation. But look at another example: we are going to visit the sick. If I am sent to the most wretched, this, in the world's sight, will be humiliation. For this reason I like it. If I am sent to persons of position, it is humiliation according to the spirit, for there is not so much virtue, so much merit in it. And so I like this kind of humili-

tion. Falling in the street brings with it shame as well as pain : so we should love this kind of humiliation. There are even faults in which there is no evil except humiliation, and humility does not require us to do them on purpose, but it does require us to be without anxiety when they are done. Of such kind are certain follies, incivilities, and inadvertences which, before they are done, should be avoided in obedience to civility and prudence. But when they are done, we should acquiesce in the humiliation they bring with them, and accept it heartily for the sake of following holy humility. I say more. If I am misled by anger and dissolute habits to use indecent language, by which God and my neighbour are offended, I will repent quickly, and will be extremely grieved at the offence, and endeavour to repair it as well as I can ; but I shall not fail to approve of the scorn and the humiliation which they have brought on me. And if one can be separated from the other, I would eagerly cast away the sin, and humbly keep the humiliation.

But although we love the humiliation which follows from evil, yet we must not fail to remedy the evil which has caused it by fitting and lawful means, and above all when the evil is of importance. If I have some hideous sore in my face, I shall take steps to heal it, but not to forget the humiliation which I have received from it. If I have done something which offends no one, I shall not excuse myself for it because, though a fault, it is not permanent. I could only excuse myself for it on account of the humiliation which I had with it. Now it is this which humility cannot allow. But if I have offended or scandalised any one heedlessly or foolishly, I will undo the offence by some genuine excuse, inasmuch as the evil is per-

manent, and charity obliges me to efface it. Besides, it sometimes happens that charity requires that we should remedy the humiliation for the good of our neighbour for whom our reputation is necessary. But in this case when we remove our humiliation from before the eyes of our neighbour to prevent his being offended, we ought to shut it up and hide it in our heart that we may be edified with it.

But you wish to know, Philothea, what are the best kinds of humiliation. And I tell you plainly that the most profitable to the soul and most agreeable to God are those which we get by accident or by the condition of our life, because we have not chosen them, but have received them as God has sent them ; and His choice is always better than our own. If we are to choose, the greatest are the best ; and those are thought the greatest which are most contrary to our inclinations, provided they are consistent with our vocation. For to say it once for all, our choice and election spoils and lessens almost all our virtues. Ah ! who will give us grace to be able to say with the great king : “ I have chosen to be abject in the house of God rather than dwell in the tabernacles of sinners ” ! <sup>1</sup> No one can do it, dear Philothea, but He who, to exalt us, lived and died so as to be “ the scorn of men and the outcast of the people.” <sup>2</sup> I have said many things which will seem hard to you when you think over them ; but, believe me, they will be sweeter than sugar and honey when you practise them. <sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Ps. lxxxiii. 11, “ Elegi abjectus esse in domo Dei mei, magis quam habitare in tabernaculis peccatorum ” (A.V., Ps. lxxxiv.).

<sup>2</sup> Ps. xxi. 7, “ Opprobrium hominum, et abjectio plebis ” (A.V., Ps. xxii.).

<sup>3</sup> “ La question que l’on me propose est, comment il se peut faire que nous venions à aimer notre bassesse, vilité,

## CHAPTER VII

*How we must preserve our Reputation while practising Humility.*

PRAISE, honour, and glory are not given to men for an ordinary virtue, but for a virtue which is excellent; for by praise we wish to persuade some to value the excellence of others; by honour we declare that we value it ourselves; and glory is, in my opinion, nothing else than a burst of fame which flashes forth from the meeting of praise and honour, so that honour and glory are like precious stones, from a heap of which glory shines like enamel. Now humility, since it cannot allow that we have any desire to excel, or to have any duty which is to be preferred to others, cannot permit us to seek out the praise, honour, and glory which are due to its excellence alone. It is, however, quite in agreement with the counsel of the wise man,<sup>1</sup> who admonishes us to be careful of our fame because a good name is the regard shown, not for some excellence, but solely for the simple and ordinary honesty and integrity of life. Humility does not prevent us from

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et abjection. Je réponds que cela se fait par le moyen de la vraie humilité chrétienne et parfaite." The Bishop then quotes the opening words of this chapter: "Desquelles nous apprenons; 1°. qu'il y a différence entre l'humilité et abjection; 2°. que nous pouvons avoir celle-ci sans celle-là; 3°. mais non la vraie humilité, sans la connaissance et l'amour de celle-ci; 4°. que ce n'est pas assez d'aimer son abjection pour être chrétiennement et parfaitement humble, si nous ne l'affectionnons par charité, c'est à dire pour l'amour de Dieu et du prochain" ("L'Esprit," part xii. § 5).

<sup>1</sup> Ecclus. xvi. 15, "Curam habe de bono nomine, hoc enim magis permanebit tibi, quam mille thesauri pretiosi et magni."

recognising it in ourselves nor in consequence from desiring its fame. It is true that humility would despise fame if charity had no need of it ; but because fame is one of the foundations of human society, and we are not only useless without it, but hurtful to society by reason of the scandal which may follow on its neglect, charity requires and humility approves that we desire it and preserve it with the greatest care.

And further, just as the leaves of trees, which of themselves are not of great value, are yet of much service both to beautify the trees and to preserve the fruit whilst still tender, so a good name, which of itself is not a thing much to be desired, is yet of very great use, not only as the ornament of our life, but also for the preservation of our virtues, especially those which are still tender and weak. The obligation to keep our reputation, and to be as men think we are, presses forward a generous courage with a powerful and gentle violence. Let us keep our virtues, my dear Philothea, because they are acceptable to God, the great and sovereign object of all our actions. But as those who wish to keep fruit are not content with preserving it, but place it in jars suitable for keeping it, so also, though divine love is the principal preserver of our virtues, yet we can still employ a good name as most fitting and useful to this end.

We must not, however, be too zealous, exact, and punctilious in preserving it ;<sup>1</sup> for those who are over

<sup>1</sup> “ On venait quelquefois dire à notre Bienheureux que quelques-uns médisaient de lui, et en disaient des choses étranges et scandaleuses. Car il n’y a point de soleil si élevé qui n’ait quelque peu d’ombre ; ni de vertu si éminente, qui ne soit sujette aux calomnies.

“ ‘ Nam quis invidiæ fines virtute reliquit.’ Et au lieu de s’excuser et se défendre, il disait de bonne grâce : ‘ Ne disent-ils que cela ? Ho ! vraiment ils ne savent pas tout.’

scrupulous and sensitive for their reputation are like those who take medicine for all sorts of little ailments. For these, thinking to preserve their health, spoil it altogether; the others, working so scrupulously to keep their reputation, lose it altogether. For by this tenderness they make themselves strange, stubborn, insupportable, and provoke the malice of the slanderers.

Dissimulation and contempt of injury and calumny are ordinarily a much more salutary remedy than resentment, resistance, vengeance. Contempt makes them disappear. If we rage, we seem to confess them. Crocodiles only hurt those who fear them; nor indeed does slander hurt any except those who trouble themselves about it.<sup>1</sup>

The excessive fear of losing a name witnesses to a great distrust of the foundation on which it rests, which is the truth of a good life. Towns which have wooden bridges over large rivers fear that they may be carried away with any kind of flood, but those which have bridges of stone are only anxious about extraordinary inundations. Thus those who have a soul solidly Christian despise as a rule the floods of injurious language; but those who feel themselves weak are

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. . . 'Laissez les dire, ce n'est qu'une croix de parole, une tribulation de vent, la mémoire en perira avec le son' ("L'Esprit," part xii. § 4).

<sup>1</sup> "And so I fed and vested me; but when I was ready to go to the river again the flood had fallen, and I walked through the mud of the main street. Who but I? Came out my people, priests, and women and children, and looked upon them with benevolence. The mud is not a good place to fight in. Said a boatman, 'Get axes and kill him, for he is the mugger of the ford.' 'Not so,' said the Brahmin, 'Look, he is driving the flood before him! He is the godling of the village.' Then they threw many flowers at me, and by happy thought one led a goat across the road" (Rudyard Kipling, "The Second Jungle Book," pp. 119, 120).

anxious in this respect. Indeed, Philothea, he who wishes to have a reputation in the sight of all loses it in the sight of all. He too deserves to lose honour who wishes to receive it from those whom vice renders really infamous and dishonoured.

Reputation is only like a sign which shows where virtue dwells.<sup>1</sup> Virtue ought therefore to be in every way preferred. This is why, if you were told you were a hypocrite because you gave yourself to devotion, if you were looked upon as a man of mean spirit because you had pardoned an injury, you would laugh at it. For besides that such judgments are made by foolish and silly people, though we should lose our good name, we should not forsake virtue, nor turn away from its path, inasmuch as we ought to prefer the fruit to the leaves, that is to say, the inward and spiritual good to all that which is outward. We must be jealous, not idolatrous, of our reputation. And as we must not offend the eye of the good, so we must not wish to satisfy that of the malicious. The beard is an ornament on the face of a man, the hair on the head of a woman. If we pluck out altogether the down from the chin or the hair from the head it is with great difficulty that it will come again. But if we cut it only, or rather shave it, it will grow again soon after and will come back stronger and thicker. Thus, although our name be cut, or even altogether shaved, by the tongue of the slanderer, "which is," says David, "like a sharp razor,"<sup>2</sup> we need not be at all anxious, for it will soon be born again, not only as

<sup>1</sup> "Secure a good name to thyself by living virtuously and humbly; but let this good name be nursed abroad, and never be brought home to look upon it" (Jeremy Taylor, "Holy Living," chap. ii. § 4).

<sup>2</sup> Ps. li. 4, "Sicut novacula acuta" (A. V., Ps. lii.).

beautiful, but even more firm than before. But if our vices, our cowardice, our evil life take away our reputation, it will be with difficulty that it will return, because its root has been plucked out. Now the root of reputation is goodness and probity; and as long as it is in us it can always reproduce the honour which is due to it.

We must forsake foolish society, useless habits, frivolous friendship, wanton acquaintance, if it is a danger to reputation. For reputation is worth more than any kind of empty satisfaction. But if in the exercise of piety, for advancement in devotion and progress in our eternal welfare, we are murmured at, scolded, vilified, let us leave these curs to bay at the moon. For if they should stir up any evil opinion against our reputation, and thus as it were cut and shave the hair and beard of our name, it will soon grow again, and the razor of slander will help our honour just as the pruning-knife helps the vine, which it makes to abound and multiply in fruit.

Keep your eyes always on Jesus Christ crucified, walk in His service with trust and simplicity, but wisely and discreetly. He will be the protector of our name, and if He permits it to be taken away from us, it will be to give us a better, or to make us profit by holy humility, one ounce of which is worth more than a thousand pounds of honour. If we are blamed unjustly, let us quietly set forth truth against calumny. If calumny perseveres, let us persevere or humble ourselves. Thus placing our reputation as well as our soul in the hands of God, we shall know how to assert it the better. Let us serve God by good and evil report, after the example of St Paul,<sup>1</sup> that we may be able to say with David: "O

<sup>1</sup> 2 Cor. vi. 8, "Per infamiam et bonam famam."

my God, it is for me that Thou hast borne the shame, and that confusion has covered my face.”<sup>1</sup>

I except, however, certain crimes so atrocious and infamous that no one ought to endure the calumny when he can be justly cleared, and certain persons on whose good reputation depends the edification of others. For in this case we ought quietly to follow up the reparation of the wrong received, according to the advice of the theologians.<sup>2</sup>

## CHAPTER VIII

*Of Meekness towards our Neighbour, and the Remedy against Anger.*

THE holy Chrism, of which by apostolic tradition use is made in the Church of God for confirmations and benedictions, is composed of olive oil mixed with balm. It represents, among other things, the two precious and much-loved virtues which shine in the sacred Person of our Lord, and which He has specially recommended to us, that, as it were, by

<sup>1</sup> Ps. lxviii. 8, “Quoniam propter te sustinui opprobrium: operuit confusio faciem meam.”

<sup>2</sup> Gratianus. “Duo fornicatores et infamia notati quendam religiosum episcopum de symonia accusare nituntur: reus alterius provinciæ archiepiscopi iudicium expetit; tandem in probatione deficit accusator: reus cogitur ad innocentiae suæ assertionem (Qu. v.). Quinto, si in probatione deficit accusator, an reus sit cogendus ad probationem innocentiae suæ?”

Qu. v. c. ii. (Gratian). “Hoc autem servandum est, quando reum publica fama non vexat. Tunc enim auctoritate ejusdem Gregorii propter scandalum removendum, famam suam reum purgare oportet” (Decret. Sec. Pars Causa vi. ad fin, Corp. Jur. Canonici,” ed. Friedberg, vol. i. pp. 553, 566).

them our heart should be particularly consecrated to His service and devoted to His imitation: "Learn of Me, for I am meek and lowly of heart."<sup>1</sup> Humility perfects us towards God and meekness towards our neighbour. The balm, which always (as I have said above<sup>2</sup>) takes the lowest place in liquids, represents humility, and the olive oil, which always takes the highest place, represents meekness and kindness, which overcomes all things and is excellent among the virtues. It is indeed the flower of charity, which, according to St Bernard, is in perfection, not only when it is patient, but also when it is meek and kind.<sup>3</sup> But take care, Philothea, that the mystical Chrism, composed of meekness and kindness, be within your heart. For it is one of the great snares of the enemy to induce many to busy themselves with the words and outward show of these two virtues, and by not looking well to their inward affections, to think themselves humble and meek when indeed they are not so at all. This is recognised in spite of their show of meekness and humility, because at the least word which is spoken to thwart them, at the least little injury they receive, they rouse them-

<sup>1</sup> St Matt. xi. 29, "Discite a me, quia mitis sum, et humilis corde."

This determines the translation of the word "douceur" at the head of this and the following chapter. Jeremy Taylor [see note 1, p. 207, in next chapter] uses the term meekness.

<sup>2</sup> Chap. iv. note.

<sup>3</sup> "Bona itaque lex caritas et suavis, quæ non solum leviter suaviter que portatur, sed etiam servorum et mercenariorum leges portabiles ac leves reddit, quas ubique non destruit, sed facit ut impleantur, dicente Domino: Non veni legem solvere, sed adimplere. Illam temperat, istam ordinat, utramque levigat" (St Bernard, Ep. xi., "De veræ et sinceræ Caritatis lege," etc.).

selves with unparalleled arrogance. It is said that those who have taken the antidote, known commonly as the "grâce de St Paul,"<sup>1</sup> do not swell up when they are bitten and stung by a viper, provided that the "grâce" be of the finest quality. In like manner, when humility and meekness are good and true, they preserve us from the swelling and heat which injuries are accustomed to provoke in our hearts. If, when stung and bitten by slanderers and foes, we become proud, puffed up, and fretful, it is a sign that our humility and meekness are not genuine and frank, but artificial and unreal.

The holy and illustrious patriarch Joseph, when sending back his brothers to the house of their father, gave them this sole counsel: "See that ye fall not out by the way."<sup>2</sup> I say the same to you, Philothea. This wretched life is only a way to happiness. Do not therefore fall out in the way one with another; walk in the company of your brothers and friends meekly, peaceably, and graciously. But I tell you simply and without reserve, do not, if possible, fall out at all, and do not accept any pretext, whatever it may be, for opening the door of your heart to wrath. For St James says quite shortly and without reserve, "The wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God."<sup>3</sup> We must indeed resist evil, and repress firmly and bravely the vices of those whom we have in charge, but at the same time meekly and peaceably. Nothing curbs an angry elephant so much as the sight of a

<sup>1</sup> The "grâce de St Paul" is a white earth, which in Malta is considered a remedy against snake-bite. (Dict. La Rousse).

<sup>2</sup> Gen. xlv. 24, "Ne irascamini in via."

<sup>3</sup> St Jas. i. 20, "Ira enim viri, justitiam Dei non operatur."

little lamb,<sup>1</sup> and nothing breaks the force of cannon-shot so well as wool.<sup>2</sup> Correction, which springs from passion, though accompanied with reason, is not taken so well as that which has no other origin but reason itself. For the reasonable soul, being naturally subject to reason, is only subject to passion by tyranny. And therefore, when reason is accompanied by passion, it is rendered hateful, its true lordship being debased in the company of tyranny. Princes honour and console their people most when they visit them with a peaceful following. But when they are at the head of an army, though it be for the public good, their coming is always disagreeable and hurtful, because, however much they may cause military discipline to be observed amongst the soldiers, they can never carry it out so far but that some disorder may occur by which the good man is trampled upon. Thus while reason rules and peaceably exercises its chastisement, correction, and rebuke, though it be done rigorously and minutely, yet each one loves it and approves it. But when it brings wrath, anger, passion in its train, which,

<sup>1</sup> "Non defuere qui naturale quoddam rerum dissidium (antipathiam nominant) magnifice creparent, cujusmodi sunt ista: furem elephantem sopiri cicararique arietis conspectu; magnetem ferrum non trahere si alii succungatur" (Plut. Sympos. dec. 2 probl. 7).

<sup>2</sup> Vasari relates that Michelangelo was made "commissario generale" over the fortifications of Florence in 1529. He fortified the hill of San Miniato, lest the enemy should hold it and bombard the city. Two pieces of artillery were planted on the Campanile of San Miniato—"di che, voltosi a batterlo con cannoni grossi i bombardier del campo, l'averan quasi lacero, e l'arebbero rovinato; ond' Michelagnolo con ballo di lana e gagliardi materassi suspesi con corde lo armò di maniera, che egli e ancora in piedi (Vasari, "Vite dei Pittori").

says St Augustine, are its soldiers,<sup>1</sup> it makes itself more fearful than loveable, and the heart remains always trampled down and ill-treated by it. It is better, says the same St Augustine, writing to Profuturus, it is better to refuse an entry to just and lawful anger than receive it, however little it may be, because when received it is difficult to make it depart, inasmuch as it enters like a little mote, and in less than no time it grows and becomes a beam.<sup>2</sup> If once it can win the night, and the sun sets on our wrath, against which the Apostle utters his warning,<sup>3</sup> it changes into hatred, and there is no means left of putting it away. For it feeds itself on a thousand false pretexts, since no angry man ever thinks his anger to be unjust.

It is thus better to try and know how to live without anger than to wish to use it moderately and wisely ; and when by imperfection and weakness we find ourselves surprised by it, it is better to repel it at once than to wish to traffic with it. For however little space be given to it, it makes itself mistress of the place, like the serpent which draws its whole body easily wherever it can place its head. But how shall I repel it ? you will ask me. Dear Philothea, at the first faint touch you have of it, you must gather up your graces promptly, not indeed roughly or impetuously, but meekly and yet seriously. For, as is

<sup>1</sup> "Deo quippe mentem subicit regendam et juvandam mentique passiones ita moderandas atque frenandas ut in usus justitiæ convertantur" (St Aug. "De Civ. Dei," ix. 5, vii. 222).

<sup>2</sup> "Nam incomparabiliter salubrius est etiam iræ juste pulsanti non aperire penetrabile cordis, quam admittere non facile recessurum et perventurum de surculo ad trabem" (St Aug., Ep. xxxviii. ad Profut. T. ii. 83).

<sup>3</sup> Ephes. iv. 26, "Iracimini et nolite peccare: sol non occidat super iracundiam vestram."

frequently the case in the sittings of Senates and Parliaments, the ushers, when they cry "Peace there," make more noise than those whom they wish to silence, so it often happens when we wish impatiently to repress our anger, we stir up more trouble in our heart than it has already, and the heart being thus troubled, can no longer be master of itself.

After this gentle effort practise the advice of St Augustine, which he gave when he was an old man to the young Bishop Anxilius: "Do," he said, "what a man ought to do." If it happen to you as the man of God said in the Psalm, "My eye is troubled with great anger," have recourse to God, crying, "Have mercy upon me, O Lord," that He may extend His right hand to repress your anger.<sup>1</sup> I mean that we ought to invoke the help of God when we are stirred to anger, in imitation of the Apostles when they were troubled by the wind and the storm in the midst of the waters. For He will command our passions to cease, and the calm will be great.<sup>2</sup> But I would have you always bear in mind that prayer which is made against present and pressing anger ought to be offered meekly,

<sup>1</sup> "Fac quod sanctum virum facere oportet, ut si tibi contigit tanquam homini, quod utique homo Dei dicit in Psalmo (vi. 8), 'Turbatus est prae ira oculus meus, exclames ad Dominum: (3) Miserere mei, Domine, quoniam infirmus sum,' ut porrigat tibi dexteram suam et comprimat iracundiam tuam, et tranquillet mentem tuam ad videndam faciendamque justitiam. Sicut enim scriptum est, Iracundia viri justitiam Dei non operatur. Nec arbitreris ideo nobis non posse subrepere injustam commotionem, quia episcopi sumus. Sed potius cogitemus inter laqueos tentationum nos periculosissime vivere, quia homines sumus" (St Aug., Ep. ccl. "Senex Anxilio episcopo juveni," t. ii. 878, 879).

<sup>2</sup> St Matt. viii. 26, "Tunc surgens, imperavit ventis et mari, et facta est tranquillitas magna."

calmly, and without any violence. This should be observed in all the remedies against this evil.<sup>1</sup>

At the same time, as soon as you perceive that you have given way to some act of anger, repair the fault as promptly as possible by an act of meekness towards the same person against whom you have been irritated. For as it is a sovereign remedy against a lie to deny it on the spot as soon as we notice that one has said it, so it is a good remedy against anger to repair it immediately by a contrary act of meekness. For, as has been said, fresh wounds are more easily curable.

For the rest, when you are calm and free from every subject of anger, make great provision of meekness and kindness, saying all your words and doing all your actions, whether small or great, in the gentlest manner possible. You remember that the Bride in the Song of Songs has not only honey on her lips and at the tip of her tongue, but also beneath the tongue,<sup>2</sup> that is to say in the breast, and not only honey but milk. For likewise we must not only have a gentle<sup>3</sup> word for our neighbour but also the whole breast, that is, all the inward part of our soul. And not only must we have the sweetness of the honey, which is aromatic and fragrant, that is, a sweetness of polite intercourse with strangers, but also the sweetness of the milk amongst our servants and near neighbours. Wherefore, those fail greatly who

<sup>1</sup> "In the actions of Religion be carefull to temper all thy instances with meeknesse, and the proper instruments of it: and if thou beest apt to be angry, neither fret violently nor entertain the too forward heats of zeal: but secure thy duty with constant and regular actions, and a good temper of body with convenient refreshment and recreations" (Jeremy Taylor, "Holy Living," chap. iv. § 8).

<sup>2</sup> Cant. iv. 11, "Mel et lac sub lingua tua."

<sup>3</sup> "Douce."

in the street are like angels and at home are like devils.<sup>1</sup>

## CHAPTER IX

### *Of Meekness towards ourselves.*

ONE of the good exercises of meekness which we can practise is that of which the subject is ourselves, never being fretful against ourselves nor against our imperfections. For although reason wishes that when we commit faults we should be displeased and grieved with them, yet we should keep ourselves from having displeasure, which is bitter and sad, fretful and angry.<sup>2</sup> And in this many commit a great fault, for when they are stirred up to wrath they are angry at being angered, indulge in sadness at being

<sup>1</sup> "Tout par amour, rien par force. C'était son grand mot, et le principal ressort de tout son gouvernement. Je lui ai entendu dire assez souvent cette belle sentence: 'En la galère royale de l'amour divin, il n'y a point de forçat, tous les rameurs y sont volontaires.' Ce qu'il a depuis exprimé en son Théotime, en ces beaux termes: 'L'amour divin gouverne l'âme avec une douceur n'ont pareille, il n'y a point de forçats ni d'esclaves, ains il réduit toutes choses à son obéissance avec une force si délicieuse, que comme rien n'est si fort que l'amour rien n'est si aimable que sa force'" ("L'Esprit," part vii. § 11).

"Douceur" was the characteristic expression of the humility of St Francis de Sales. It is almost impossible to adhere rigidly to one word in translation. Meekness, gentleness, sweetness, all have their place in the fulness of the meaning of "douceur."

<sup>2</sup> "Quand vous vous sentez blessé, c'est-à-dire quand vous voyez que vous avez fait quelque faute, soit par pure fragilité, soit avec reflexion et par malice, ne vous affligez pas trop pour cela, ne vous laissez pas aller au chagrin et à l'inquiétude" ("Combat Spirituel," chap. xxvi.).

saddened, and are fretful because they have been fretted. By this means they keep their heart preserved and tempered by anger. And though it may appear that the second anger ruins the first, yet for all that it serves as an opening and passage for a new anger on the first occasion which presents itself. And besides this, the anger, fretfulness, and bitterness which we have against ourselves tend to pride and have their origin in self-love only,<sup>1</sup> which is anxious and disturbed at the sight of its own imperfections. For as a judge punishes the wicked far better when he gives his sentences with reason and in a spirit of calmness than when he gives them with impetuosity and passion, inasmuch as when he judges with passion he does not punish faults according to what they are in themselves but according as he is himself, so we punish ourselves far better by calm and steady repentance than by sharp, hasty, and angry repentance, inasmuch as repentance made with impetuosity is not made according to the gravity of our faults, but according to our inclinations. For instance, he who loves chastity will fret with unparalleled bitterness over the least fault he has committed against it, and yet will only laugh at a gross scandal of which he has been guilty. On the other hand, he who abhors slander will torment himself for having made a light murmur, and will take no account of a gross fault committed against chastity. So also will it be in other cases. And this happens for no other reason except that they form the judgment of their conscience not by reason but by passion.

Believe me, Philothea, as the remonstrances of a

<sup>1</sup> "Sçachez au reste que toute inquiétude lui déplait ; parceque de quelque nature qu'elle soit, elle n'est jamais sans quelque défaut et vient toujours d'un mauvais principe qui est l'amour propre" ("Combat Spirituel," chap. xxv.).

father made gently and heartily have far more power over a child in correcting him than those which are angry and irritating, so when our heart has committed some fault, if we reprove it with gentle and calm remonstrances, showing more compassion with it than passion against it,<sup>1</sup> encouraging it to amend, the repentance which will be born of it will enter much further, and will penetrate deeper than a fretful, angry,<sup>2</sup> and strong repentance.

For myself, if I had, for instance, a great desire not to fall into the vice of vanity, and had nevertheless fallen with a great fall, I should not wish to reprove my heart in this manner: "Art thou not wretched and detestable, that after so many resolutions thou hast allowed thyself to be carried away by vanity! Die of shame, raise no more thine eyes to heaven, thou that art blind, impudent, treacherous, and disloyal to thy God"—and such like things. But I should correct it reasonably and by way of compassion: "Up, my poor heart, here we are fallen into the fault which we had resolved so steadily to avoid. Ah! let us rise again and leave it for ever; let us call upon the mercy of God and let us set our hope on it that it will help us henceforth to be more firm, and set us again on the road of humility. Let us be of good courage; let us from this day forward be on our guard; God will help us; we shall be sufficient": and on such a reproof as this I shall build a solid and firm resolution no more to fall into the fault, taking suitable means for this, and following the advice of my director.

But if any one finds that his heart cannot be

<sup>1</sup> "Il faut aussi que notre compassion soit tendre; mais sans chagrin et sans trouble comme étant l'effet d'une charité tout pure" ("Combat Spirituel," chap. xxv.).

<sup>2</sup> "Injurieuse," De Sacy; "ireuse," Migne.

sufficiently roused by this gentle correction, he will be able to employ reproach and hard and stern rebuke to stir it up to a profound confusion, provided that, after having abused and provoked his heart, he will finish by some alleviation, ending all his regret and anger in a gentle and holy confidence in God, in imitation of the great penitent who, seeing his soul afflicted, raised it up again in this manner: "Why art thou so heavy, O my soul, and why art thou so disquieted within me? Hope in God, for I will yet thank Him, for He is the salvation of my countenance and my true God."<sup>1</sup>

Raise, therefore, your heart when it falls, quite gently, humbling yourself much before God for the knowledge of your wretchedness, without in any way being astonished at your fall,<sup>2</sup> since it is not a thing to be wondered at that infirmity should be infirm, and weakness weak, and misery wretched. Detest, however, with all your might the offence which God has received from you, and, with great courage and trust in His mercy, place yourself in the train of the virtue you had abandoned.

<sup>1</sup> Ps. xli. 6, 7, "Quare tristis es, anima mea? Et quare conturbas me? Spera in Deo, quoniam adhuc confitebor illi: salutare vultus mei et Deus meus" (A.V., Ps. xlii.).

<sup>2</sup> "Animæquior esto, et ad majorem sustinentiam accingere. Non est totum frustratum si te sæpius percipis tribulatum, vel graviter tentatum. Homo es, et non Deus: caro es, non Angelus. Quomodo tu posses in eodem statu virtutis permanere, quando hoc defuit Angelo in cælo, et primo homini in paradiso?" ("De Imit. Chr.," lib. iii. chap. lvii.).

## CHAPTER X

*That we must manage our Affairs with Care, and without either Haste or Anxiety.*

THE care and diligence which we ought to have in our affairs are things very different from solicitude, anxiety, and haste.<sup>1</sup> The angels are careful for our salvation and procure it with diligence, but in carrying it through they do not give way to either solicitude, anxiety, or haste. For care and diligence belong to their charity, but solicitude, anxiety, and haste would be wholly contrary to their happiness, since care and diligence may be accompanied with calmness and peace of spirit, but not with solicitude or anxiety, and far less with haste.

Be therefore careful and diligent in all affairs that you have in charge, dear Philothea; for God having entrusted them to you, wishes you to be very careful about them. But, if possible, do not be solicitous or anxious about them—that is, do not undertake them with uneasiness, anxiety, and worry, and do not be in a hurry in the work. For haste of all kinds troubles the reason and the judgment, and hinders us from doing well the thing over which we are hurrying.

When our Lord reproved St Martha, He said “Martha, Martha, thou art anxious and troubled about many things.”<sup>2</sup> You see if she had been simply careful, she would not have been troubled but because she was in anxiety and perplexity, she

<sup>1</sup> “Let all these things be done prudently and moderately not with scruple and vexation” (Jeremy Taylor, “Hol Living,” chap. i. § 1).

<sup>2</sup> St Luke x. 41, “Martha, Martha, sollicita es et turbaris erga plurima.”

hurried and troubled herself. It was for this our Lord rebuked her. The rivers which flow gently in the plain carry large ships and rich merchandise, and the rains which fall gently in the fields make them fruitful in grass and in grain. But the torrents and streams which rush in great force over the earth ruin the land near them, and are useless for traffic, just as strong and tempestuous rains ravage the fields and the pastures. Work done with impetuosity and haste is never well done. We should make haste softly<sup>1</sup> (as the old proverb says). He who hurries, says Solomon,<sup>2</sup> runs the risk of tripping and knocking his feet; we always do a thing quickly enough when we do it well. The bumble-bees make much more noise and are much more in haste than the bees, but they make nothing except wax, and no honey at all. So also those who hurry with violent anxiety and a burning solicitude never do much and never do it well.

Flies do not worry us by their movement but by their number. So larger matters do not trouble us so much as small matters when they are in great number. Accept, therefore, quietly the affairs which present themselves to you, and try to do them in order one after the other. For if you try to do them all at once, or in disorder, you will overstrain yourself and weaken your spirit, and will usually be over-burdened and over anxious,<sup>3</sup> and fruitless.

<sup>1</sup> "Festina lente" (cf. "L'Esprit," part. viii. § 18).

<sup>2</sup> Prov. xix. 2, "Qui festinus est pedibus, offendet."

<sup>3</sup> "Let your employment be such as may become a reasonable person; and not be a business fit for children or distracted people, but fit for your age and understanding. For a man may be very idly busy, and take pains to so little purpose, that in his labors and expence of time he shall serve no end but of folly and vanity" (Jeremy Taylor, "Holy Living," chap. i. § 1).

And in all your affairs rest wholly on the providence of God, through which alone all your plans will succeed. Yet work on your part quite quietly to co-operate with it, and then believe that if you put your whole trust in God, the success which will follow will always be the most profitable for you, though according to your own judgment it may seem good or bad.<sup>1</sup>

Do like little children, who with one hand cling to their father, with the other gather strawberries and blackberries along the hedges. In the same way, while you are amassing and handling the good things of this world with one of your hands, hold fast with the other the hand of your heavenly Father, turning from time to time to Him, to see if He approves of your household arrangements or your occupations. And take good care, above all things, not to let go His hand or His protection, whilst you are amassing and gathering more; for if He lets you go, you will do nothing without being disappointed. I would say, dear Philothea, that when you are engaged in the affairs and ordinary occupations, which do not require so steady and pressing an attention, you should look to God more than to your affairs; and when the affairs are of such great importance that they require all your attention if they are to be well done, you should from time to time look to God.<sup>2</sup> Those who travel by sea, tha

<sup>1</sup> "That we need not fear this instrument to be a snare to us, or that the duty must end in scruple, vexation, and eternal fears, we must remember, that the life of every man may be so ordered (and indeed must) that it may be a perpetual serving of God. . . . For God provides the good things of the world to serve the needs of nature" (Jeremy Taylor, "Holy Living," chap. i. § 1).

<sup>2</sup> "God hath given every man work enough to doe, that there shall be no room for idlenesse, and yet hath so ordered

they may reach the land they wish, look upwards to the heavens rather than downwards where they are sailing. So God will rest with you, in you, and for you, and your rest will be followed by consolation.<sup>1</sup>

## CHAPTER XI

*Of Obedience.*

CHARITY alone brings us to perfection, but obedience, chastity, and poverty are the three great means of acquiring it. Obedience consecrates our heart, chastity our body, and poverty our means to the love and service of God. They are the three branches of the spiritual cross, yet all founded on the fourth, which is humility.<sup>2</sup> I will say nothing of these three virtues, so far as they are solemnly vowed, because this only concerns the Religious—nor even so far as they are vowed simply, because though the vow always gives much grace and merit to all the virtues,<sup>3</sup> yet to

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the world that there shall be space for devotion" (Jeremy Taylor, "Holy Living," chap. i. § 1).

<sup>1</sup> "Il vaut mieux, disait-il, faire peu et bien, qu'entreprendre plusieurs bonnes choses et les laisser imparfaites" "L'Esprit," part vi. § 9).

"C'était un de ses mots ordinaires et chéris, 'Peu et bon'" "L'Esprit," part viii. § 18).

<sup>2</sup> "Obedience is a complicated act of virtue, and many graces are exercised in one act of obedience. It is an act of humility, of mortification and self-denial, of charity to God, of care of the publick, of order and charity to ourselves and all our society, and a great instance of a victory over the most refractory and unruly passions" (Jeremy Taylor, "Holy Living," chap. iii. § 1).

<sup>3</sup> "La grâce, non la nature, est la mesure de la gloire. Qui aura jeûné avec vœu ou sans vœu avec plus ou moins de grâce, aura plus ou moins de gloire. . . . Il y a plus de

make us perfect it is not necessary that they should be vowed provided they be observed. For though when vowed, and especially solemnly vowed, they bring a man into the state of perfection, yet to bring him to perfection it is sufficient that they should be observed, there being much difference between the state of perfection and perfection itself.<sup>1</sup> All Bishops and Religious are in the state of perfection, and yet, as is too often seen, they are not all in perfection. Let us try then, Philothea, to practise these three virtues well, each one according to his vocation. For although they do not bring us into the state of perfection, they will nevertheless give us perfection. Thus we are all bound to the practice of these three virtues, though not all to practise them in the same manner.

There are two sorts of obedience: the one necessary and the other voluntary. By necessary obedience you ought humbly to obey your ecclesiastical superiors, such as the Pope and the Bishop, the parish priest, and those entrusted with their authority. You ought to obey your political superiors—that is to say, your Prince and the magistrate, who are set over your country. You ought lastly to obey your superiors in the household, your father, mother, master, mistress.<sup>2</sup>

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bonté et de perfection naturelle au jeûne fait par vœu qu'à celui qui est fait sans vœu, et aussi plus ou moins de perfection surnaturelle selon qu'il est fait avec plus ou moins de grâce et de charité" ("L'Esprit," part v. § 15).

<sup>1</sup> "Nous ne connaissons jamais notre propre perfection: car il nous arrive comme à ceux qui naviguent sur mer: ils ne savent pas s'ils avancent; mais le maître pilote qui sait l'air on ils naviguent, le connaît" ("L'Esprit," part ix. § 19).

<sup>2</sup> "Pay that reverence to the person of thy Prince, of his Ministers, of thy Parents and spiritual Guides, which by the customs of the place thou livest in are usually paid to such persons in their several degrees" (Jeremy Taylor, "Holy Living," chap. iii. § 1). Cp. Ch. Cat. Duty towards neighbour.

Now this obedience is called necessary, because no one can exempt himself from the duty of obeying his superiors, God having given them authority to command and govern, each one according to his charge. Do what they bid you, for that is of necessity.<sup>1</sup> But to be perfect, follow also their counsel, and even their desires and inclinations, so far as charity and prudence permit. Obey when they order you to do something pleasant,<sup>2</sup> such as eating or taking exercise. For although it seem to be no great virtue to obey in this case, yet it would be a great evil to disobey. Obey in things indifferent, such as wearing such and such a coat, going by this way or that, singing or being silent, and your obedience will already be very acceptable. Obey in things difficult, rough, and hard, and your obedience will be perfect. Obey, indeed, gently without reply, promptly without delay, gaily without grief, and above all obey lovingly, for the love of Him who for love of us became obedient even to the death of the Cross, and

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“Obéissez avec joye et sans resistance à vos Supérieurs, exécutez promptement tout ce qu’ils vous commanderont” (“Combat Spirituel,” chap. xix.).

<sup>1</sup> “L’excellence de l’obéissance ne consiste pas à suivre les volontés d’un supérieur doux et gracieux, qui commande par prières plutôt que comme ayant autorité: mais à plier le col sous le joug de celui qui est âpre, rigoureux, impérieux, sévère. C’était un des sentiments de notre bienheureux Père. . . . Il ajoutait une conception fort agréable, ‘Obéir à un supérieur farouche, dépiteux, chagrin, et à qui rien ne plaît c’est puiser l’eau claire d’une fontaine qui coule par la gueule d’un lion de bronze” (“L’Esprit,” part. viii. § 1).

<sup>2</sup> “l’estime que l’obéissance est plus exquise dans le commandement des choses agréables que des désagréables: parce que dans les désagréables il ne faut pour l’ordinaire soumettre que le sens, mais aux agréables il faut soumettre le jugement” (“L’Esprit,” part. xv. § 6).

who, as St Bernard says, loved rather to lose life than obedience.<sup>1</sup>

To learn to obey your superiors easily comply easily with the will of your equals, giving way to their opinions in that which is not bad, without being quarrelsome or stubborn. Accommodate yourselves willingly to the service of your inferiors, so far as reason will permit, without exercising any imperious authority over them as long as they are good.

It is a mistake to think that we should obey easily if we were in Religion, when we find ourselves ashamed and stubborn in rendering obedience to those whom God has set over us.

We call voluntary obedience that which we are only bound to practise of our own choice, and which is not imposed upon us by any one else. We do not usually choose our Prince or our Bishop, our father or our mother, nor do we frequently choose our husband. But we choose our confessor, our director. Now whether in choosing him we make a vow of obedience (like St Teresa, who is said, in addition to the obedience vowed to the superior of her Order, to have bound herself by a simple vow to obey Father Gratian<sup>2</sup>), or whether, without a vow, we bind ourselves to obey some one, yet this obedience is always called voluntary, because its foundation rests on our own will and choice.

We must obey all our superiors, each one in the matter which he has in charge. As regards public polity and public affairs, we must obey our Princes ;<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> "Christus dedit vitam, ne perderet obedientiam" (St Bern. De Off. episc. ix. 33).

<sup>2</sup> Cp. part i. chap. iv. note.

<sup>3</sup> "Lift not thy hand against the Prince or Parent upon what pretence soever: but bear all personal affronts and

our Bishops in ecclesiastical polity<sup>1</sup>; in domestic polity, our father, mother, husband; as to the special guidance of our soul, our own director and confessor.

Take care that the acts of piety which you ought to observe are ordered by your spiritual Father, because in this way they will be better and will have double grace and goodness; the one of themselves, because they are pious; and the other of the obedience which has ordered them, and in virtue of which they are done. Blessed are the obedient, for God will never permit them to go astray.

## CHAPTER XII

### *Of the Necessity of Chastity.*

CHASTITY is the lily of the virtues.<sup>2</sup> It makes men almost equal to the angels. Nothing is beautiful but by purity, and the purity of men is chastity. Chastity is called honesty, and the possession

inconveniences at their hands, and seek no remedy but by patience and piety, yielding and praying, or absenting thyself" (Jeremy Taylor, chap. iii. § 1).

<sup>1</sup> "Une fois le sérénissime duc de Savoie ayant des guerres sur les bras, et pressé de nécessités publiques et urgentes, obtint un bref du Pape pour faire quelque levée de deniers sur les biens de l'Eglise dans ses états. . . . Notre Bienheureux fit assembler les bénéficiers de son diocèse, et les voyant peu disposés à satisfaire à ce qui était enjoint par sa Sainteté . . . il entra en zèle tant pour la maison de Dieu que pour celle de son prince, et leur dit en l'excès de sa ferreur: Quoi! Messieurs, est-ce à nous à alléguer des raisons quand les deux souverains concourent en un même commandement?" ("Esprit," part v. § 12).

<sup>2</sup> "La chastité, c'est la belle et blanche vertu du corps, dont la profession, s'appelle honneur, un lis qui se nourrit entre les épines, une fleur admirable, mais fleur qui est un fruit d'honneur et d'honêteté" ("L'Esprit," part ii. § 1).

of it honour. It is called integrity, and its contrary corruption. In short, it has a glory of its own as being the beautiful and white virtue of the soul and the body.

We are never permitted to derive any unchaste pleasure from our bodies, in whatsoever manner it be, except in lawful marriage, the sanctity of which can by a just compensation repair the loss we receive in the delight; and even in marriage we must observe modesty of intention, that if there is any unseemliness in the sensual pleasure which we enjoy, there may be nothing but modesty in the will which works it.<sup>1</sup>

The chaste heart is like the pearl oyster, which can receive no drop of water but that which comes from heaven.<sup>2</sup> For it can receive no pleasure but that of marriage, which is ordained of heaven. Beyond this it is not permitted even to entertain a single thought which is voluptuous, voluntary, and cherished.

For the first degree of this virtue, take care, Philothea, how you admit any kind of sensual plea-

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“ La chastité est une vertu tendre et délicate, ombrageuse, timide, tremblante, qui à peur de tout, qui transit au branle de la moindre feuille ” (“ L’Esprit,” part i. § 4).

<sup>1</sup> “ I call all desires irregular and sinful that are not sanctified: 1. By the holy institution, or being within the protection of marriage. 2. By being within the order of nature. 3. By being within the moderation of Christian modesty. Against the first are fornication, adultery, and all voluntary pollutions of either sex. Against the second are all unnatural lusts and incestuous mixtures. Against the third is all immoderate use of permitted beds ” (Jeremy Taylor, “ Holy Living,” chap. ii. § 3).

<sup>2</sup> “ Conchæ in quibus recipiuntur margaritæ, certo anni tempore luxuriante conceptu, sitiunt rorem velut maritum cujus desiderio intrans: et oscitatione quadam hauriunt humorem cupitum; sic concipiunt gravidæque fiunt. . . . Ita magis de cœlo quam de mari partus habent ” (Solin. Polyhistor, chap. xiii.).

sure which is prohibited and forbidden. Such are all those which are taken apart from marriage, or even in marriage when taken against the rule of marriage.<sup>1</sup>

For the second, cut yourself off as much as you can from useless and superfluous delights, though they be lawful and permissible.<sup>2</sup>

For the third, do not fix your affection on the delights and sensual pleasures which are commanded and ordered; for although we must practise necessary delights, that is to say, those which concern the end and institution of holy marriage, yet we should never fix our heart and spirit upon them.<sup>3</sup>

For the rest, every one has great need of this virtue. Those who are in widowhood<sup>4</sup> ought to have a courageous chastity, which not only despises present and future objects, but resists the imagination,<sup>5</sup> which pleasures lawfully received in marriage are able to

<sup>1</sup> "They that have performed these duties and parts of Chastity, will certainly abstain from all exterior actions of uncleanness: those noon-day and mid-night Devils, those lawless and ungodly worshippings of shame and uncleanness; whose birth is in trouble, whose growth is in folly, and whose end is shame" (Jeremy Taylor, "Holy Living," chap. ii. § 3).

<sup>2</sup> "J'ai encore ici un avis de grande importance à vous donner, c'est de mortifier vos appetits dans les choses même qui sont permises; mais non nécessaires" ("Combat Spirituel," chap. xiii.).

<sup>3</sup> "It is a duty of matrimonial chastity to be restrained and temperate in the use of their lawful pleasures" (Jeremy Taylor, "Holy Living," chap. ii. § 3).

<sup>4</sup> Chapter xl. at the end of this Part enlarges on the subject of vidual chastity. Cf. also the special section on "Rules for Widows or Vidual Chastity," in "Holy Living," chap. ii. § 3.)

<sup>5</sup> "A widow must restrain her memory and her fancy: not recalling or recounting her former permissions and freer licenses with any present delight" (Jeremy Taylor, "Holy Living," chap. ii. § 3).

produce in their spirits, and make them for this reason the more susceptible to unchaste allurements. For this reason, St Augustine admires the purity of his friend Alipius,<sup>1</sup> who had wholly forgotten and despised the carnal pleasures which he had nevertheless sometimes indulged in his youth. And, in truth, when fruits are quite fresh they may be preserved, some in straw, some in sand, and others in their own foliage; but when they are once bruised, it is almost impossible to keep them except with honey and sugar as a preserve. Thus the chastity which has never yet been wounded or violated can be kept in many ways. But when it has once been bruised, nothing can preserve it except an excellent devotion, which, as I have often said,<sup>2</sup> is the true honey and sugar of the spirit.

Virgins<sup>3</sup> have need of an extremely simple and tender chastity,<sup>4</sup> that they may banish from their hearts all kinds of curious thoughts, and despise with an absolute contempt all kinds of unclean pleasures, which of a truth do not deserve to be desired by men, since asses and swine are more capable of them than they are. Indeed, these pure souls should take great care never to call in doubt the fact that chastity is incomparably better than all which is incompatible with

<sup>1</sup> "Erat enim ipse (Alypius) in ea re etiam tunc castissimus, ita ut mirum esset; quia vel experientiam concubitus cœperat in ingressu adolescentiæ suæ, sed non hæserat" (St. Aug., "Confess.," vi. 21, t. i. 129).

<sup>2</sup> Cf. part i. chap. ii.

<sup>3</sup> The last chapter in this Part consists of a word to virgins. It is a further counsel on virginal chastity, and may be compared with Jeremy Taylor's Acts of Virginal Chastity in the "Holy Living," chap. ii. § 3.

<sup>4</sup> "Virgins must contend for a singular modesty." "They must be retired and unpublick; for all freedom and looseness of society is a violence done to virginity" (Jeremy Taylor, "Holy Living," chap. ii. § 3).

it.<sup>1</sup> For, as the great St Jerome says, the enemy violently tempts virgins with a desire to make trial of pleasures, representing them as infinitely more pleasant and delightful than they are. And it is this which often troubles them very much, because, says the holy father, they think the things of which they are ignorant to be sweetest.<sup>2</sup> For as the moth, when it sees the flame, flies curiously round it, to try if it is as sweet as it is beautiful, and driven by this fancy, does not stop until it loses itself at the first attempt; so the young very often allow themselves to be so taken with the false and foolish idea they have of the pleasures of the flames of passion, that after some curious fancies they in the end ruin and lose themselves, being more foolish in this matter than the moths. These at least have some reason for thinking that the fire is pleasant because it is so beautiful, whereas those, knowing that that which they look for is quite unchaste, do not for all that cease to overestimate its foolish and brutal delight.

But as to those who are married,<sup>3</sup> it is most true

<sup>1</sup> "Virginitas est vita Angelorum, the enamel of the soul, the huge advantage of religion, the great opportunity for the retirements of devotion: and being empty of cares, it is full of prayers: being unmingled with the world, it is apt to converse with God: and by not feeling the warmth of a too forward and indulgent nature, flames out with holy fires, till it be burning like the Cherubim and the most exstasied order of holy and unpolluted Spirits" (Jeremy Taylor, "Holy Living," chap. ii. § 3).

<sup>2</sup> "Inter has et tantas illecebras voluptatum, etiam ferreas mentes libido domat: quæ majorem in virginibus patitur famem, dum dulcius putat omne quod nescit" (St Jer., Ep. lxxxix. ad Matrem et Filiam, t. iv. part ii. 732).

<sup>3</sup> The subject of matrimonial chastity is taken up again and dealt with in greater detail in chapters xxxviii. and xxxix. Jeremy Taylor has also a section on "Rules for Married Persons, or Matrimonial Chastity," in his "Holy Living," chap. ii. § 3.

(though the vulgar cannot think it) that chastity is most necessary for them, because it does not consist in them of abstaining wholly from carnal pleasures, but of controlling themselves amidst these pleasures.<sup>1</sup> Now as the commandment, "Be ye angry, and sin not,"<sup>2</sup> is, in my opinion, more difficult than this, "Be not angry at all,"<sup>3</sup> and that it is easier to avoid anger than to temper it; so is it easier to keep ourselves altogether from carnal pleasures than to preserve moderation in them. It is true that the holy licence of marriage has a special force in extinguishing the fire of concupiscence, but the weakness of those who rejoice in it passes easily from permission to excess, and from use to abuse. And as we see many rich men steal, not by want but by avarice, so we see many married people exceed by intemperance<sup>4</sup> and incontinence alone, notwithstanding the lawful purpose for which they ought to and could check themselves, their concupiscence being like wildfire, which burns in this place and that without fixing itself anywhere. It is always a dangerous thing to take strong medicines because if we take more than we ought, or they have not been well prepared, we receive much harm from them. Marriage has been blessed and ordained in part as a remedy for concupiscence,<sup>5</sup> and it is without

<sup>1</sup> "It is a duty of matrimonial chastity to be restrained and temperate in the use of their lawful pleasures" (Jeremy Taylor, "Holy Living," chap. ii. § 3).

<sup>2</sup> Eph. iv. 26, "Iracimini, et nolite peccare."

<sup>3</sup> Gen. xlv. 24, "Ne irascamini."

<sup>4</sup> "That it be with a temperate affection, without violent transporting desires, or too sensual applications" (Jeremy Taylor, "Holy Living," chap. ii. § 3).

<sup>5</sup> "Secondly, It was ordained for a remedy against sin, and to avoid fornication; that such persons as be married might live chastely in matrimony, and keep themselves undefiled

doubt a very good remedy, though a violent one, and consequently very dangerous unless it is used with discretion.

I add that the variety of human affairs, not to mention long sicknesses, frequently separates husbands from their wives. It is for this reason that the married have need of two kinds of chastity, the one for complete abstinence, when they are separated on the occasions I have just referred to; the other for moderation when they are together in the ordinary course of their life. Indeed, St Catherine of Sienna saw among the damned several souls grievously tormented for having violated the sanctity of marriage; and this had come about, she said, not for the greatness of the sin, since murders and blasphemies are more weighty, but inasmuch as those who commit it do not make it a matter of conscience, and consequently indulge a long while in it.<sup>1</sup>

You see, then, that chastity is necessary for all kinds of people. "Follow peace with all men," says the Apostle, "and holiness, without which no one

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members of Christ's body" (The Form of Solemnization of Matrimony, English Prayer Book, 1549).

"Tertia est . . . qui sibi imbecillitatis suæ conscius est, nec carnis pugnam vult ferre, matrimonii remedia ad vitanda libidinis peccata utatur" (Cat. Rom., part ii., de Matr. Sacr., § 14).

<sup>1</sup> "Queste è il remedio, dolcissimo fratello: che noi ci spogliamo di questo uomo vecchio . . . ordinando la vita nostra, vivendo come uomo e non come animale; leviando la nuvola dell' amore proprio di noi; e odiare la propria nostra sensualituo. . . . E l' uomo che ha i suoi figliàli, ama i suoi figliuoli e la donna e gli altri che gli sono congiunti; ma amali d' amore ordinato e non disordinato. Sicché, ama con ordine, e non senza ordine. . . . Onde, se egli ha lo stato del matrimonio, egli'l conserva con grande onestà" (Lettre di Santa Catherine, ed. Tommaseo, vol. iv. pp. 103, 107).

shall see God.”<sup>1</sup> Now by holiness he means chastity, as St Jerome<sup>2</sup> and St Chrysostom<sup>3</sup> have remarked. No, Philothea, no one will see God without chastity, no one will dwell in His holy Tabernacle who is not pure in heart. And, as the Saviour Himself says, the dogs and the unchaste shall be banished from it,<sup>4</sup> and “Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.”<sup>5</sup>

### CHAPTER XIII

#### *Advice for Preserving Chastity.*

**B**E extremely prompt in turning away from all the ways and from all the snares of incontinence. For this evil works insensibly, and, by small beginnings, makes way to great misfortunes. It is always more easy to flee than to cure.<sup>6</sup>

Human bodies are like glasses, which cannot be carried close together without running the risk of being

<sup>1</sup> Heb. xii. 14, “Pacem sequimini cum omnibus, et sanctimonia, sine qua nemo videbit Deum.”

<sup>2</sup> “Sublimia usque ad lumbos et renes perveniunt, ut omnis ignobilis libido truncetur, et possideamus sanctificationem corporis sine qua nemo vide Deum” (St Jer. in cap. xlvii. Ezech. t. iii. 1055).

<sup>3</sup> “Pacem sequimini cum omnibus et sanctitatem, hoc est honestatem” (St Chrys. in cap. xii. Epist. ad Heb.).

<sup>4</sup> Apoc. xxii. 15, “Foris canes et venefici et impudici.”

<sup>5</sup> St Matt. v. 8, “Beati mundi corde; quoniam ipsi Deum videbunt.”

<sup>6</sup> “Fuyez donc avant toutes choses l’occasion du péché; parceque vous êtes comme de la paille auprès d’un grand feu” (“Combat Spirituel,” chap. xix.).

“Flee from it, that is, think not at all of it” (Jeremy Taylor, “Holy Living,” chap. ii. § 3)

broken. They are like fruit, which, though they be whole and well ripened, become bruised when they touch one another. Water even, however fresh it may be within a vessel, when it is touched by some beast of the earth, cannot long preserve its freshness. Never permit any one, Philothea, to touch you rudely, either in play or in fondness. For though perchance chastity may be preserved amid these actions, since they are light rather than malicious, yet the freshness and the flower of chastity always receives from them hurt and loss. But to permit yourself to be touched immodestly is the entire ruin of chastity.

Chastity depends on the heart as its source, but it looks to the body as its subject. This is why it is lost by all the outward senses of the body and the thoughts and desires of the heart. It is impurity to look, to hear, to speak, to smell, to touch immodest things when the heart is interested in them and takes pleasure in them. St Paul says quite shortly, "Let not fornication be so much as named among you."<sup>1</sup> Bees not only do not wish to touch carrion, but they fly away from it and dislike intensely the stench which comes from it.<sup>2</sup> The sacred Bride, in the Song of Songs, has hands which drop myrrh, an essence which is a preservative against corruption. Her lips are bound with a fillet of scarlet, a sign of the modesty of her words. Her eyes are those of a dove, by reason of their purity. Her ears have earrings of gold, in token also of purity. Her nose is amid the

<sup>1</sup> Ephes. v. 3, "Fornicatio autem, et omnis immunditia, aut avaritia, nec nominetur in vobis, sicut decet sanctos."

<sup>2</sup> "Tetro quovis odore non modo apes offenduntur, sed unguento odorato, tanquam enim puellæ urbanæ et modestæ teterrimum odorem præclare contemnunt, et unguenti suavitatem a se detestantur" (Ælian. de animal. ii. 58).

cedars of Libanus, a wood which is incorruptible.<sup>1</sup> So ought the soul to be devout, chaste, pure, and modest, in hands, in lips, in ears, in eyes, and in all the body.

And with reference to this, I quote to you the words which the ancient Father John Cassian repeats as having come from the lips of the great St Basil, who, speaking of himself, said one day: "I do not know what concerns women, and yet I am not a virgin."<sup>2</sup> Certainly, chastity can be lost in as many ways as there are ways of impurity and lasciviousness; and according as they are large or small, some of these enfeeble it, some wound it, and others make it die altogether. There are certain intimacies and indiscreet, wanton, and sensual passions, which, to speak properly, do not violate chastity, and yet enfeeble it, render it languid, and tarnish its beautiful whiteness. There are other intimacies and passions, not only indiscreet, but vicious; not only wanton, but immodest; not only sensual, but carnal; and by them chastity is at least seriously wounded and affected. I say, at least, because it dies of them and perishes altogether, when folly and lasciviousness give to the flesh the last result of voluptuous pleasure; for then chastity perishes more unworthily, wickedly, and unhappily than when it is lost by fornication, or even by adultery and incest. For these last kinds of villany are only sins, but the others, as Tertullian says in his Book on

<sup>1</sup> Cant. v. 5, "*Manus meæ stillaverunt myrrham.*" iv. 3, "*Sicut vitta coccinea, labia tua.*" iv. 1, "*Oculi tui columbarum.*" i. 10, "*Marenulas aureas faciemus tibi.*" vii. 4, "*Nasus tuus sicut turris Libani.*"

<sup>2</sup> "*Fertur sancti Basilii Cæsariensis episcopi districta sententia, 'Et mulierem,' inquit, 'ignoro, et virgo non sum.' In tantum intellexit incorruptionem carnis, non tam in mulieris esse abstinencia, quam in integritate cordis*" (Cass. Inst. v. 19).

Chastity, are monsters of iniquity and of sin.<sup>1</sup> Now Cassian does not believe any more than I do that St Basil was thinking of any such irregularity when he accused himself of not being a virgin; for I think that he said it with regard to the evil and voluptuous thoughts which, though they had not stained his body yet had tainted his heart, for the chastity of which generous souls are extremely jealous.

Do not keep company with immodest persons,<sup>2</sup> especially if they are impudent, as they nearly always are; <sup>3</sup> for as he-goats when they touch the sweet almond trees with their tongues make them become bitter,<sup>4</sup> so souls tainted and hearts corrupted scarcely ever speak to any one, whether of the same sex or of the other, without making them to some extent fall away from chastity. They have poison in their eyes and in their breath, like the basilisks.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> "Reliquas autem libidinum furias impias et incorpora et in sexus ultra jura naturæ, non modo limine, verum omni ecclesiæ tecto submovemur, quia non sunt delicta, sed monstra" (Tert. de pudicitia, chap. iv.).

<sup>2</sup> "Avant que la tentation vienne, on doit employer tous les soins à en prévenir jusques aux moindres occasions et à s'éloigner des personnes dont le commerce est dangereux" ("Combat Spirituel," chap. xix.).

<sup>3</sup> "Flee from all occasions, temptations, loosenesses of company, Balls and Revellings, undecent mixtures of wanton dances, idle talk, private society with stranger women, starings upon a beauteous face, the company of women that are singers, amorous gestures, garish and wanton dressings, feasts and liberty, banquets and perfumes, wine and strong drinks, which are made to persecute chastity" (Jeremy Taylor, "Holy Living," chap. ii. § 3).

<sup>4</sup> "Oleam si lambat capra, sterilesce auctor est Varro. Quædam hac injuria moriuntur; aliqua deteriora tantum fiunt, ut amygdala; ex dulcibus enim figurantur in amaras" (Plin. Hist. Nat. xvii. 37).

<sup>5</sup> "Basiliscus etsi magnitudine palmi sit, tamen vel serpentum maxima illius aspectu non longo post intervallo, sed

On the other hand, keep company with those who are chaste and virtuous,<sup>1</sup> think over sacred things and frequently read them, for the word of God is chaste, and makes those who take pleasure in it chaste also. It is for this that David compares it to the topaz,<sup>2</sup> a precious stone which by its special property quenches the fire of concupiscence.<sup>3</sup>

Keep yourself always near to Jesus Christ crucified, spiritually by meditation, really by the Holy Communion. For as they who sleep on the herb known as *agnus castus* become chaste and modest,<sup>4</sup> so also resting your heart on our Lord, who is the very Lamb that is chaste and unspotted, you will see that your soul and your heart will soon be found purified from all stains and incontinence.

*jam nunc statim expirationis appulsu torrescit*" (*Ælian. de animal, ii. 5*).

<sup>1</sup> "Treat not thyself alone, but run forth into company, whose reverence and modesty may suppress, or whose society may divert thy thoughts" (Jeremy Taylor, "Holy Living," chap. ii. § 3).

<sup>2</sup> "Ps. cxviii. 127, "Ideo dilexi mandata tua, super aurum et topazion" (A.V., Ps. cxix.).

<sup>3</sup> "Ita topazius omnium gemmarum in se continens pulchritudinem, omnium vincit honore" (St Jer. Brev. in Psalt., t. ii. App. p. 453).

<sup>4</sup> "In Atheniensium thesmophoriis, Atticæ mulieres agnicusti foliis cubilia substernant, quod et serpentibus sit infesta, et simul existimant ab appetitione Veneris prohibere, unde nomen traxisse videtur" (*Ælian. de animal, ix. 26*).

## CHAPTER XIV

*Of Poverty of Spirit observed amidst Riches.*

"BLESSED are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."<sup>1</sup> Wretched, therefore, are the rich in spirit, for theirs is the misery of hell. He is rich in spirit who has his riches in his spirit, or his spirit in his riches. He is poor in spirit who has no riches in his spirit, nor his spirit in his riches. The halcyons make their nests like an apple, and only leave in them a small opening on the top; they place them on the seashore, and make them, moreover, so strong and impenetrable that when the waves catch them, the water never enters; but keeping always the right way up, they remain in the sea, on the sea, and masters of the sea.<sup>2</sup> Your heart, dear

<sup>1</sup> St Matt. v. 3, "Beati pauperes spiritu; quoniam ipsorum est regnum cœlorum."

<sup>2</sup> "And wars have that respect for his repose

As winds for halcyons, when they breed at sea."

—Dryden, "Death of Cromwell," i. 144.

"Expect St Martin's summer, halcyon days."

—Shakespeare, 1 Henry VI., i. 2.

"Nidi Alcyonum admirationem habent pilæ figura paulum eminenti, ore per quam angusto grandium spongiarum similitudine; ferro intercidi non queunt, franguntur ictu valido ut spuma arida maris. Nec unde configitur, invenitur; putant ex spinis aculeatis, piscibus enim vivant" (Plin. Hist. Nat. x. 47).

"Cette similitude du nid de l'alcyon qu'il décrit si proprement, et applique si délicatement dans quelqu'une de ses lettres, était la vraie image de son cœur" ("Esprit," part x. § 34, "Calme dans l'orage").

"Sed hieme quod pullos dicitur tranquillo mari facere, eos dies halcyonios appellant" (Varro. de lingua Lat. vii. 5, 97).

Philothea, ought to be like this, open only to heaven, and impenetrable to riches and the things that perish. If you have them, keep your heart free from the love of them, that it may always hold itself upwards, and even in the midst of riches may be without riches and master of riches. No, do not place this heavenly spirit within earthly possessions; let it always be above them, over them, but not within them.

There is a difference between having poison and being poisoned. Apothecaries have nearly all the poisons for use when occasion offers, but they are not poisoned for all that, because they have not the poison in their body but in their shops. Thus you may have riches without being poisoned by them. This will be the case if you have them in your house or in your purse, and not in your heart. To be rich indeed, and poor in love of them, is the great happiness of the Christian; for he has by this means the convenience of riches for this world, and the merit of poverty for the other.

Alas! Philothea, no one will own to being covetous;<sup>1</sup> every one disavows this baseness and meanness of heart. We excuse ourselves on the ground of children who press us, on the prudence which requires that we should have some means to live on. We never have too much.<sup>2</sup> There are

<sup>1</sup> "Covetousness is the most phantastically and contradictory disease in the whole world, and it must therefore be incurable, because it strives against its own cure" (Jeremy Taylor, "Holy Living," chap. iv. § 8).

<sup>2</sup> "Covetousness pretends to heap much together for fear of want, and yet after all his pains and purchase, he suffers that really which at first he feared vainly; and by not using what he gets, he makes that suffering to be actually, present and necessary, which in his lowest condition was but future contingent, and possible." . . . "But all these to look up

always certain necessary reasons for having more. And even the most covetous not only do not own that they are so but do not even in their conscience think that they are so. No! for covetousness is a mighty force which makes itself the more unfelt the more violent and ardent it is. Moses saw the sacred fire which burnt the bush and did not consume it.<sup>1</sup> But, on the contrary, the worldly fire of covetousness consumes and devours the covetous man, and yet does not burn him at all. For even in the midst of the fiercest ardour and heat he boasts of the most agreeable freshness in the world, and considers that his insatiable restlessness is a thirst that is altogether natural and pleasant.

If you have a long, ardent, and anxious desire for the good things you do not possess, you may say what you will that you do not wish to have them unjustly, yet for all that you will not cease to be really covetous. He who desires to drink ardently, longingly, and anxiously, though he may only wish to drink water, makes a sure sign that he has the fever.

O Philothea, I do not know if it is a just desire to desire to have justly what another possesses justly; for it seems that by this desire we wish to suit our own convenience by the inconvenience of another. He who possesses anything justly, has he not more reason for keeping it justly than we have for wishing to have it justly? And why then do we extend our desire to that which is convenient to him, so as to deprive him

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and to tell over, and to take accounts by and make himself considerable, and wondered at by fools, that while he lives he may be called Rich, and when he dyes he may be accounted miserable" (Jeremy Taylor, "Holy Living," chap. iv. § 8).

<sup>1</sup> Exod. iii. 2, "Et videbat quod rubus arderet, et non comburetur,"

of it? At most, if the desire is just, yet it certainly is not charitable. For we should never be willing that any one should have even a just desire for that which we wish to keep justly. This was the sin of Ahab, when he wished to have justly the vineyard of Naboth, who wished still more justly to keep it. He desired it ardently, longingly, and with anxiety, and doing so he offended God.<sup>1</sup>

Do not desire your neighbour's goods, dear Philothea, until he begins to desire to part with them; for then his desire will make yours not only just but charitable. Yes! for I indeed wish that you should take care to increase your means and opportunities, provided you do so not only justly but gently and charitably.<sup>2</sup>

If you have a strong affection for the possessions you have, if you are much concerned about them, setting your heart on them, fixing your thoughts upon them, and fearing with a quick and restless fear to lose them, believe me, you have still some sort of fever; for those who are feverish drink the water which is brought them with a certain haste, with a kind of attention and satisfaction which those who are healthy

<sup>1</sup> 3 Kings (1 Kings) xxi. 2-4, "Locutus est ergo Achab ad Naboth dicens: Da mihi vineam tuam . . . daboque tibi pro eo vineam meliorem. . . . Cui respondit Naboth: propitius sit mihi Dominus, ne dem hereditatem patrum meorum tibi. Venit ergo Achab in domum suam indignans, et frendens super verbo."

<sup>2</sup> "In prices of bargaining concerning uncertain merchandises you may buy as cheap ordinarily as you can, and sell as dear as you can, so be it (1) without violence, and (2) when you contract on equal terms, with persons in all senses (as to the matter and skill of bargaining) equal to yourself . . . and (3) when there is no deceit, and no necessity, and no Monopoly" (Jeremy Taylor, "Holy Living," chap. iii. § 3).

are not accustomed to have. It is not possible to have much pleasure in a thing without putting some considerable amount of affection into it. If you happen to love your property and you feel that your heart is grieved and much afflicted about it, be sure, Philothea, that you have a good deal of affection for it; for nothing is such a proof of your affection for a thing you have lost as the affliction which comes from the loss.

Never desire with a full and formed desire anything which you have not got. Do not even fix your heart too much on that which you have. Do not be cast down at the losses which may happen to you; and you will have some reason to believe that being rich indeed, you are not at all so in affection, but that you are poor in spirit, and consequently blessed, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to you.

## CHAPTER XV

*How we ought to practise Real Poverty even when we are really Rich.*

THE painter Parrhasius painted the Athenian people with so ingenious an imagination that he represented them at one and the same time as different and changeable, passionate, unjust, inconstant, courteous, clement, merciful, haughty, honourable, humble, boastful, and cowardly;<sup>1</sup> I, dear Philothea, would place

<sup>1</sup> "Parrhasius pinxit demon Atheniensium argumento ingenioso. Volebat namque varium, iracundum, injustum, inconstantem; eundem exorabilem, clementem, misericordem, excelsum, gloriosum, humilem, ferocem, fugacemque, et omnia pariter ostendere" (Pin. Hist. Nat. xxxv. 36).

together in your heart riches and poverty at the same time, a great care and a great scorn of things temporal.

Take much more care to make your riches useful and fruitful than the worldly minded do.<sup>1</sup> Tell me, are not the gardeners of great princes more attentive and diligent in cultivating and beautifying the gardens which they have in charge than if they were their own property? But why? Doubtless for this reason, that they consider these gardens as the gardens of princes and kings to whom they wish to make themselves acceptable by their services. Philothea, the possessions we have are not ours. God has given them to us to cultivate, and He wishes us to make them fruitful and useful, and so far as we do so we render to Him acceptable service.

We ought then to have a greater and more substantial care of our possessions than the worldly minded, for they have only a care of them for love of self, but we ought to work for the love of God. Now as the love of self is a violent, turbulent, eager love, so care of self is full of trouble, of grief, of anxiety; and as the love of God is gentle, peaceful, and calm, so the care which comes from it, though it be the care of our worldly possessions, is kindly, gentle, and gracious. Let us have then this gracious care for the preservation, yes, even for the increase of our temporal

<sup>1</sup> "Love is as communicative as fire, as busie, and as active, and it hath four twin daughters, extreme like each other; and but that the Doctors of the School have done as Thamar's midwife did, who bound a Scarlet thread, something to distinguish them, it would be very hard to call them asunder. Their names are: 1. Mercy. 2. Beneficence, or well-doing. 3. Liberality. And 4. Almes: which by a special privilege hath obtained to be called after the Mother's name, and is commonly called Charity" (Jeremy Taylor, "Holy Living," chap. iv. § 8).

riches, whenever any fitting opportunity presents itself, and so far as our condition requires it; for God wishes that we should do so for love of Him.

But take care that self-love does not deceive you, for sometimes it counterfeits the love of God so well that we cannot say which is which. Now, to prevent it deceiving you, to prevent this care of temporal riches being turned into avarice, beyond what I have said in the foregoing chapter, we should very often practice real and actual poverty amid all the faculties and riches which God has given us.

Give up, therefore, always some part of your means, giving it to the poor with a good heart;<sup>1</sup> for to give what we have is, so far, to impoverish ourselves, and the more you give the more you will impoverish yourself. It is true that God will return it, not only in the other world, but also in this; for there is nothing which promotes prosperity in this world so much as alms-giving; but until God returns it to you, you will always be so far impoverished.<sup>2</sup> O how holy and rich is the impoverishment which comes of alms-giving!

Love the poor and poverty, for by this love you will become truly poor, since (as the Scripture says) "we are fashioned according to the things which we

<sup>1</sup> "Give almes with a cheerful heart and countenance, 'not grudgingly or of necessity, for God loveth a cheerful giver'; and therefore give quickly when the power is in thy hand, and the need is in thy Neighbour, and thy Neighbour at thy door. He gives twice that relieves speedily" (Jeremy Taylor, "Holy Living," chap. iv. § 8).

<sup>2</sup> "That portion of our estate, out of which a tenth, or a fifth, or a twentieth, or some offering to God for religion and the poor goes forth, certainly returns with a greater blessing upon all the rest" (Jeremy Taylor, "Holy Living," chap. iv. § 8).

love.”<sup>1</sup> Love makes equal those who love.<sup>2</sup> “Who is weak, am I not as weak as he?”<sup>3</sup> says St Paul. He might have said, “Who is poor, am I not as poor as he?” for love made him to be like to those he loved. If, then, you love the poor, you will indeed participate in their poverty and will be poor like them.

Now, if you love the poor be often among them, take pleasure in seeing them in your house, and visit them in theirs: speak freely with them, be very pleased that they should be near you at church, in the street, and elsewhere. Be poor of speech with them, speaking to them as their companion, but rich of hand, sharing your riches with them, since they are more abundant than theirs.

Would you do more, dear Philothea? Do not be content with being poor like the poor, but be more poor than the poor, and how? The servant is less than his master: make yourself therefore the servant of the poor, go and serve them in their beds when they are sick, yes, even with your own hands. Cook for them, and at your own expense; sew for them and wash for them. Oh, my dear Philothea, this service is more triumphant than kingship. I cannot sufficiently admire the zeal with which this counsel was practised by St Louis,<sup>4</sup> one of the greatest kings the sun has seen, a great king in greatness of every kind. Very frequently he served at the table of the poor whom he

<sup>1</sup> Hos. ix. 10, “Et facti sunt abominabiles, sicut ea quæ dilexerunt.”

<sup>2</sup> “‘Amicitia æqualitas.’ Hoc proverbium ad Pythagorem auctorem refertur, qui ait amicitiam æqualitatem esse. Plato, libro sexto de Legibus, illud citat tanquam vetus dictum” (Erasm. Adag. chil. i. cant. 1, 2).

<sup>3</sup> 2 Cor. xi. 29, “Quis infirmatur, et ego non infirmor?”

<sup>4</sup> Cf. part i. chap. iii. note, “In pauperes erat valde beneficus” (Joinville, part ii. chap. xxviii.).

maintained, and almost every day he caused three of them to come to his own table, and often ate with matchless love the remains of their broth. When he visited the hospitals of the sick (which he did frequently), he usually set himself to serve those who had the most horrible diseases, the leprous, the cancerous, and such like, rendering them his service with bare head and bended knee, reverencing in their persons the Saviour of the world, and cherishing them with a love as tender as a gentle mother knows how to show to her child. St Elizabeth,<sup>1</sup> daughter of the King of Hungary, mixed freely with the poor, and to delight them sometimes dressed as a poor woman among her ladies, saying to them, "If I were poor I should dress like this." O my God, dear Philothea, how poor were this prince and this princess in their riches, and how rich they were in their poverty!

"Blessed are they who are thus poor, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven;" "I was hungry, you gave Me meat; I was cold, you clothed Me; possess the kingdom which has been prepared for you from the beginning of the world."<sup>2</sup> Thus will the King of the poor and the King of kings say in the great Judgment.

There is no one who at some time or other has not some deficiency or lack of convenience. Sometimes a guest arrives at our house, whom we wish and ought to entertain well; there are no means at hand to do so. Or we have our dress clothes in one place, and have need of them in another place where we have to

<sup>1</sup> Cf. part i. chap. iv. note.

<sup>2</sup> St Matt. xxv. 34-36, "Venite, benedicti Patris mei, possidete paratum vobis regnum a constitutione mundi. Esurivi enim, et dedistis mihi manducare; sitivi et dedistis mihi bibere; . . . nudus, et cooperuistis me."

appear. Or, perchance, all the wines in our cellar are working and turning sour ; there only remain the bad and the tart. Or we find ourselves in the country in some wretched village, where everything is wanting ; there is neither bed nor room nor table nor service. In fact, it is easy to be frequently in want of something, however rich we may be. Now this is to be poor indeed in that which is wanting to us. Philothea, be pleased with such misfortunes as these ; accept them with a good heart ; bear them cheerfully.

When there happen inconveniences which impoverish you, whether more or less, such as storm, fire, flood, drought, thefts, lawsuits, oh ! then is the right season to practise poverty, to accept quietly the lessening of your property, and accommodate yourself patiently and constantly to this impoverishment. Esau presented himself to his father with his hands all covered with hair, and Jacob did the same ;<sup>1</sup> but, because the hair which was on the hands of Jacob did not belong to his skin but to his gloves, his hair could be removed without hurting him or flaying him. On the contrary, because the hair on the hands of Esau belonged to his skin, which was naturally hairy all over, he who would have torn off the hair would have given him much pain ; he would have cried aloud, he would have become quite warm in self-defence. When our property holds us at the heart, if storm, or theft, or roguery tear away some part of it, what complaints, what trouble, what impatience we make over it ! But when our riches belong only to the care which God wishes us to have for them, and do not hold our heart, if they are torn from us, we lose neither our senses nor

<sup>1</sup> Gen. xxvii. 11, "Nosti quod Esau frater meus homo pilosus sit, et ego lenis." v. 16, "Pelliculasque hœdorum circumdedit (Jacob) manibus."

our calmness. This is the difference between beasts and men as to their clothing, for the clothing of beasts clings to their skin, but that of men is only put on, so that they may put it on or take it off as they wish.<sup>1</sup>

## CHAPTER XVI

*How to practise Richness of Spirit amidst Real Poverty.*

BUT if you are really poor, my dear Philothea, O God, be poor also in spirit, make a virtue of necessity, and employ this precious store of poverty for what it is worth. Its brilliancy is not discovered in this world, but yet it is indeed extremely beautiful and rich.

Have patience, you are in good company; our Lord, our Lady, the Apostles, many Saints have been poor, and though able to be rich, have scorned to be so. How many of high position in the world have there been, who with many contradictions have gone and sought out holy poverty with the utmost care in cloisters and hospitals? They have taken much trouble to find it; for example, St Alexius,<sup>2</sup> St

<sup>1</sup> “Je lui disais une fois que lui et moi étions de pauvres évêques. ‘Il ne faut pas dire pauvres,’ me repartit-il, ‘mais peu riches.’ La raison de cela était qu’il appelait riche celui qui avait du revenu suffisamment pour vivre, sans être obligé de travailler d’esprit ou de corps pour gagner sa vie” (“L’Esprit,” part xiv. § 14).

<sup>2</sup> St Alexius Romanus. “Alexius Romanorum nobilissimus, propter eximium Jesu Christi amorem prima nocte nuptiarum peculiari Dei monitu relinquens intactam sponsam, illustrium orbis terræ Ecclesiarum peregrinationem suscepit. Quibus in itineribus cum ignotus septemdecim annos fuisset, aliquando apud Edessam, ejus nomine divulgato, inde navi discessit. Ad portum Romanum appulsus, a patre suo

Paula,<sup>1</sup> St Paulinus,<sup>2</sup> St Angela,<sup>3</sup> and many others. And behold, Philothea, being more gracious in regard to you, it comes into your presence. You have met it without seeking it and without trouble. Embrace it therefore as the dear friend of Jesus Christ, who was born, and lived, and died with poverty, which was His nurse the whole of his life.

Your poverty, Philothea, has two great privileges, by means of which it can make you deserving of much. The first is that it has not in any way come by your own choice, but by the will of God only, who has made you poor without there being any concurrence of your own will. Now that which we receive simply by the will of God is always most acceptable to Him, provided that we receive it of a good heart and for love of His holy will. Where there is less of ourselves, there is more of God. The simple and free acceptance of the will of God makes our suffering extremely pure.

The second privilege of this poverty is that it is

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*tanquam alienus pauper hospitio accipitur: apud quem, omnibus incognitus, cum decem et septem annos vixisset, relicto scripto sui nominis, sanguinis, ac totius vitæ cursus, migravit in cælum, Innocentio primo summo Pontifice*" (402-417) (Brev. Roman., July 17).

<sup>1</sup> "Quid ego referam, amplæ et nobilis domus, et quondam opulentissimæ, omnes pene divitias in pauperes erogatas" (St Jer., Epitaphiam Paulæ, Ep. lxxxvi., t. iv. pt. ii. p. 671).

<sup>2</sup> St Paulinus, Bishop of Nola (409-431). "Hujus viri charitas præcipue celebratur, quod vastata a Gothis Campania, omnem facultatem, ne relictis quidem sibi rebus ad vitam necessariis, in alendos pauperes, et captivos redimendos contulerit" (Brev. Rom., June 22).

<sup>3</sup> St Angela of Foligno, c. 1309. Beatified by Pope Innocent XII. in 1693. Commemorated January 4. Her life was written during her lifetime by her Confessor, Arnald, a Franciscan. She was of a rich and honourable family of Umbria. On the death of her mother, husband, and children, her heart turned to God.

a poverty which is indeed poor. A poverty hired, caressed, valued, helped, and assisted holds fast to riches, and is at least not altogether poor; but a poverty despised, rejected, reproached, and abandoned is poverty indeed. Now this as a rule is the poverty of the secular orders; for, because they are not poor by their choice but of necessity, little account is taken of it; and because little account is taken of it, their poverty is poorer than that of the Religious, although this indeed has in other respects an excellence of great value, and is much more to be commended by reason of the vow and intention by which it has been chosen.

Do not complain, then, of your poverty, my dear Philothea; for we only complain of that which displeases us, and if poverty displeases you, you are no more poor in spirit, but rich in affection.

Do not be at all troubled that you are not so well helped as you need, for in this consists the excellence of poverty. To wish to be poor, and to suffer no inconvenience from it, is too great an ambition. It is to wish the honour of poverty and the convenience of riches.

Do not be ashamed of being poor, and of asking an alms in charity. Receive that which is given you with humility, and accept a refusal with gentleness. Remember frequently the journey which our Lady made into Egypt to carry her dear Child there, and how much scorn, poverty, and misery she had to bear. If you live like this, you will be very rich in your poverty.

## CHAPTER XVII

*Of Friendship, and first of all of that which is  
Evil and Frivolous.*

LOVE holds the first rank among the virtues of the soul.<sup>1</sup> It is the king of all the movements of the heart. It converts all the rest to itself, and makes us such as it loves.<sup>2</sup> Take good care, therefore, dear Philothea, to have it in no way evil, for you will very soon be yourself altogether evil. Now friendship is the most dangerous love of all, because others can be without intercourse, but friendship being wholly based on it, we can scarcely have it with any one, without sharing in his nature.

All love is not friendship, for one can love without being loved, and then there is love but not friendship, inasmuch as friendship is mutual love; and if it is not mutual, it is not friendship. And it is not sufficient that it should be mutual; the parties themselves who love one another must know their mutual affection. For if they are ignorant of it, they will have love but not friendship. With it they must have some kind of intercourse, which is the foundation of friendship.

According to the difference of intercourse, friendship is also different, and the intercourse is different

<sup>1</sup> "Love is the greatest thing that God can give us, for Himself is love; and it is the greatest thing we can give to God, for it will also give ourselves, and carry with it all that is ours" (Jeremy Taylor, "Holy Living," chap. iv. § 3).

<sup>2</sup> "Talis est quisque, qualis ejus dilectio est. Terram diligis? terra eris. Deum diligis? Quid dicam, Deus eris? Non audeo dicere ex me; Scripturas audiamur. Ego dixi: Dii estis, et filii altissimi omnes" (St Aug. Tr. ii. in 1 St Jn. ii. 15; t. iii. part ii. 843).

according to the difference of the benefits which are interchanged. If the benefits are false and vain, the friendship is false and vain; if the benefits are true, the friendship is true; and the more excellent the benefits, the more excellent will be the friendship. For as honey is more excellent when it is gathered from the florets of the sweetest flowers, so love based on the most excellent intercourse is the best. And as there is honey in *Heraclea*<sup>1</sup> in Pontus which is poisonous, and makes those who eat it become senseless, because it has been gathered from the aconite, which is abundant in that region, so friendship based upon the interchange of false and vicious benefits is altogether false and evil.

The participation of carnal pleasures is a mutual propensity and animal allurement, which can no more bear the name of friendship among men than that of asses and horses when they meet for the like purpose. And if there were no other intercourse at all in marriage, neither would there be any friendship at all in it. But because besides this there is in it the interchange of life, of industry, of riches, of affections,<sup>2</sup> and of an indissoluble faithfulness, therefore the friendship of marriage is a true and holy friendship.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> "Heracleæ in Ponto mella venenata perniciosissima existunt, ab apibus facta. Nec dixere auctores e quibus floribus ea fierent. Nos trademur quæ comperimus. Herba est ab exitio et jumentorum quidem, sed præcipue caprarum appellata ægolethron. Hujus flores concipiunt noxium virus, aquoso vere marcescentes" (Plin. Hist. Nat. xxi. 44).

<sup>2</sup> "Thirdly, it was ordained for the mutual society, help, and comfort, that the one ought to have of the other, both in prosperity and adversity" (Solemnization of Matrimony, English Prayer Book, 1549).

<sup>3</sup> "To have and to hold from this day forward, for better, for worse, for richer, for poorer, in sickness and in health,

Friendship based upon the interchange of sensual pleasures is altogether gross, unworthy of the name of friendship. So also is that which is based upon virtues which are frivolous and vain, because these virtues depend also on the senses. I call sensual pleasures those which are attached immediately and chiefly to the outward senses, such as the pleasure of seeing beauty, of hearing a sweet voice, of touch, and such like. I call frivolous virtues certain habits and vain qualities which the weak call virtues and accomplishments. Listen to the conversation of the greater number of girls, of women, and of young people ; they will not hesitate to say such a gentleman is most virtuous, he has many accomplishments ; for he dances well, he plays all kinds of games well, he dresses well, he sings well, he flatters well, he has a good appearance. And mountebanks consider most virtuous those who are the greatest buffoons. Now as all this concerns the senses, so the friendships which proceed from it are called sensual, vain, and frivolous, and merit rather the name of wantonness than friendship. Such are usually the friendships of young people who are concerned with their moustaches, their hair, their side glances,<sup>1</sup> their clothes, their haughty look, their tattle—friendships worthy of the age of the lovers who as yet have virtue only in down,<sup>2</sup> and a judgment only in bud. So it is that such friendships are only passing, and melt like snow in the sun.

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to love and to cherish (and to obey) till death us do part” (*Ibid.*).

<sup>1</sup> “Oeillades,” oglings.

<sup>2</sup> “En bourre.” “Duvet qui couvre certains bourgeons à leur naissance” (Littré).

## CHAPTER XVIII

*Of Wanton Love.*<sup>1</sup>

WHEN these wanton friendships are practised between people of different sex, and without the idea of marriage, they are called wanton love; <sup>2</sup> for being only abortions or rather phantoms of friendship, they cannot support the name either of friendship or of love, because of their unexampled vanity and imperfection. Now in these the hearts of men and of women are taken up, engaged, and entangled one with the other in vain and foolish affections, based upon the frivolous intercourse and sorry agreement of which I have just spoken. And although this sottish love usually melts and sinks into the basest of carnal lusts and lasciviousness, yet this is not the first design of those who practise it, or else it would not be merely wanton love, but open lewdness. Sometimes several years will pass without anything happening between those who are tainted with this folly, which is directly contrary to chastity of body, since they only go so far as to deceive their hearts with wishes, desires, sighs, courtings, and such-like silliness and vanity, and this for many ends.

Some have no other design than to satisfy their hearts with giving and receiving love, following in this their inclination to love; they look to nothing for the choice of their love but their taste and instinct, so that at the first meeting with a pleasant person, without examining his inward character or behaviour, they

<sup>1</sup> "Des amourettes." "Amour sans passion, par amusement" (Littré).

<sup>2</sup> "Turning the grace of God into wantonness" (Jude 4. Jeremy Taylor, "Holy Living," chap. ii. § 3).

begin their courting, and thrust themselves into the wretched meshes from which afterwards they have difficulty in freeing themselves. Others allow themselves to enter upon it in vanity, thinking that there is no little glory in catching and binding hearts by love. These make their choice for the sake of glory, and set their snares and spin their webs in places which are specious, prominent, uncommon, and distinguished. Others are carried away at the same time both by their inclination to love and by vanity ; for though they have the heart inclined to love, yet they will only take it with some advantage of glory. These friendships are all evil, foolish, and vain—evil, inasmuch as they aim at and end at last in the sin of the flesh, and steal away love, and consequently the heart, from God, from the woman, from the husband, to whom it is due ; foolish, because they have neither foundation nor reason ; vain, because they bring neither profit, nor honour, nor contentment.

On the contrary they waste time, they compromise honour, without giving any other pleasure but that of the eagerness of expecting and hoping without knowing what is wished for or expected ; for these wretched and weak spirits are always thinking that there is something, I do not know, what to desire in the pledges which are given them of mutual love, but yet they cannot say what it is, the desire of which has no end, but goes on always, weighing down their hearts with perpetual mistrust, jealousy, and anxiety.

St Gregory Nazianzen, writing against vain women, speaks excellently on this subject. Here is a passage which he addresses indeed to women, but which is good also for men : “ Thy natural beauty is sufficient for thy husband. If it is for several men, like a

net spread for a flock of birds, what will happen? This one will be pleasing to thee, who will please himself with thy beauty. Thou wilt give glance for glance, look for look. Suddenly there will follow smiles and little words of love, dropt by stealth at first, but soon becoming more familiar, and passing on to open flattery. Take care, my tongue, how you speak of what comes after. Yet I will say this truth. Nothing whatever which young men and women say or do together in their foolish pleasantries is free from sharp stings. All the trifles of such wanton love are connected one with another, and follow one another, neither more nor less than a piece of iron drawn by the magnet draws several other pieces after it.”<sup>1</sup>

Oh! how well he speaks, this great bishop! What do you think you are doing? Do you think you are giving love or not? But no one gives it willingly who will not take it necessarily. He who takes is taken in this sport. The herb aproxis receives and brings forth fire as soon as it sees it.<sup>2</sup> Our

<sup>1</sup> “*Forma tua et nativa virum juvat; ast si eadem ambit  
Multos, rete gregi tenditur ut volucrum.*

*Ille placet tibi cui ipsa places, cernisque tuentem,*

*Obtutum risus, sermoque persequitur.*

*Hoc furtim primum, mox hinc fiducia surgit:*

*Ne ulterius pergas, garrula lingua cave.*

*Hoc tamen effabo vere, quod non jocus ullus*

*Fœmineo in cœtu est, qui stimulo caveat.*

*Cuncta etenim sibi inhærescunt, velut ordine ferrum,*

*Quod traxit Magnes, ferrea quæque rapit.”*

—St Greg. Naz. *Carmen* lxii. *adversus mulieres  
ambitiosas sese adornantes*, vol. ii. p. 148.

<sup>2</sup> “*A Pythagoira aproxis appellatur herba, cujus radix a  
longinquo concipiat ignes*” (Plin. *Hist. Nat.* xxiv. 101).

The *Dictamnus fraxinella* is called the burning bush, because it is said that on very warm still nights the volatile oil can be ignited without burning the plant.

hearts do the same. As soon as they see a soul inflamed with love for them, they are at once aglow for it. I would gladly take of it, some one will tell me, but not too far. Alas ! you deceive yourself ; this fire of love is more active and penetrating than it seems ; you think you will receive only a spark, and you will be quite astonished to see that in a moment it will have seized your whole heart, reduced all your resolutions to ashes, and your reputation to smoke. The wise man exclaims, " Who will have compassion on an enchanter bitten by a snake ? " <sup>1</sup> And I exclaim after him, Oh, fools and senseless ! Do you think you will charm love so as to humble it after your liking ? You wish to play with it ; it will sting you and bite your body. And do you know what will be said ? Every one will make fun of you, and will smile because you wished to enchant love, and with a false confidence have wished to place in your bosom a dangerous adder, which has sported and deprived you of soul and honour.

O God ! what blindness is it to stake on the credit of pledges so frivolous the principal part of our soul ! Yes, Philothea, for God only requires man for the sake of his soul, and the soul only for the will, and the will only for love. Alas ! we have not nearly so much love as we need. I would indeed say, we have need of infinitely more than we have to love God sufficiently, and yet, wretched men that we are, we waste it and shed it on paltry, vain, and frivolous things, as if we had it to spare. Ah ! this great God, who would have for Himself the whole of the love of our souls in recognition of their creation, preser-

<sup>1</sup> Ecclus. xii. 13, " Quis miserebitur incantatori a serpente percusso."

vation, and redemption,<sup>1</sup> will demand a very exact account of the foolish deduction we have made from it. If He will make so exact an account of our idle words,<sup>2</sup> what will He do of idle, impertinent, foolish, and hurtful friendships!

The walnut-tree does much damage to the vines and to the fields in which it is planted, because, being a large tree, it draws all the moisture from the soil in such a way that this is not sufficient afterwards to nourish the rest of the plants. Its foliage is so dense that it makes a deep and thick shadow, and at length draws to itself those who pass by, who spoil and trample down everything around it when they are beating down the fruit. This wanton love does the same damage to the soul, for it occupies it to such an extent, and draws out its movements so powerfully, that it is not able afterwards to give itself to any good work. The leaves, that is, the intercourse, amusements, and courting are so frequent that they waste all its leisure time. And at length it draws to itself so many temptations, distractions, suspicions, and other consequences that the whole heart is trampled down and spoiled by them. In short, this wanton love banishes not only heavenly love, but also the fear of God; it enervates the spirit, weakens the reputation. It is, in a word, the laughing-stock of courts, but the plague of hearts.

<sup>1</sup> "We bless thee for our creation, preservation, and all the blessings of this life; but above all for thine inestimable love in the redemption of the world by our Lord Jesus Christ" (General Thanksgiving, English Prayer Book, 1662).

<sup>2</sup> St Matt. xii. 36, "Omne verbum otiosum quod locuti fuerint homines, reddent rationem de eo in die judicii."

## CHAPTER XIX

*Of True Friendships.*

O PHILOTHEA, love every one with a full and charitable love, but have no friendship at all except with those who can have fellowship with you in the things of virtue. And the more excellent are the virtues which you have in your intercourse, the more perfect will your friendship be. If you have fellowship in knowledge, your friendship will indeed be most praiseworthy; more so still will it be if you have fellowship in the virtues, in prudence, discretion, fortitude, and justice. But if your mutual and reciprocal fellowship is composed of charity, of devotion, of Christian perfection, O God, how precious will be your friendship! It will be excellent because it will come from God, excellent because it reaches out to God, excellent because its very bond is God, excellent because it will last eternally in God. Oh, how good it is to love on earth as it is loved in heaven, and to learn to cherish one another in this world as we shall do eternally in the other. I do not speak here of the simple love of charity, for it ought to be shown to all men; but I speak of the spiritual friendship by which two or three or several souls have fellowship in their devotion, in their spiritual affections, and become among themselves one spirit. How deservedly will such happy souls be able to say, "Oh, how good and acceptable it is that brethren should dwell together!" Yes! for the delicious balm of devotion drops from one to the other in continual intercourse, so that it may

<sup>1</sup> Ps. cxxxii. 1, "Ecce quam bonum, et quam jucundum habitare fratres in unum" (A.V., Ps. cxxxiii.).

be said that God has spread over this friendship His blessing and life for ever and ever.<sup>1</sup>

I think that all other friendships are but shadows in comparison with this, and that their bonds are but chains of glass and of jet in comparison with this bond of holy devotion, which is all of gold.

Do not form any friendship at all of another kind, I mean of the friendships which you yourself form. For you need not give up or despise for the sake of this the friendships which nature and former duties have obliged you to cultivate with members of your own family, your relatives, your benefactors, your neighbours, and others. I speak of those which you have chosen for yourself.

Many will say perhaps that we ought not to have any kind of particular affection and friendship, inasmuch as it occupies the heart, distracts the spirit, and produces jealousy. But they are deceived in their counsels, for they have seen in the writings of many holy and devout authors that particular friendships and extraordinary affections do infinite harm to the religious; they think that it may be the same with the rest of the world.<sup>2</sup> But there is a great difference: for seeing that in a well-ordered monastery the common design of all tends to true devotion, it is not required to form in it a particular fellowship of this kind, lest for fear of seeking in that which is personal that which is common to all, they may pass from that which is personal to that which is partial. But as regards those

<sup>1</sup> Ps. cxxxii. 4, "Quoniam illic mandavit Dominus benedictionem et vitam usque in sæculum" (A.V., Ps. cxxxiii.).

<sup>2</sup> "Il avoue pourtant que les amitiés particulières, si utiles dans la vie civile ne conviennent pas aux communautés religieuses bien réglées; et la raison qu'il en rend est, qu'elles produisent ordinairement des partialités" ("Esprit de S. François de Sales," Marsollier, § 17).

who are in the world and who embrace the true virtue, it is necessary for them to bind themselves together by a holy and sacred friendship. For by means of this they encourage one another, they help one another, they stir up one another to good works. And as those who walk on the level have no need to lend one another a hand, but those who are on rough and slippery roads take hold of one another to walk more surely, so those who are in religion have no need of particular friendships, while those who are in the world have need of them to assure themselves and to help one another amid the difficult paths which they have to climb. In the world all do not aim at the same end, all have not the same spirit. We must therefore without doubt draw ourselves apart, and form friendships according to our purpose. Such a particular choice makes us indeed partial, but it is a holy partiality which makes no division but that between good and evil, the sheep and the goats, the bees and the hornets, a separation which is necessary.

Indeed, we could not deny that our Lord loved with a gentler and more special friendship St John,<sup>1</sup> Lazarus,<sup>2</sup> Martha,<sup>3</sup> Magdalen,<sup>4</sup> for the Scripture bears witness to it. We know that St Peter had a tender affection for St Mark<sup>5</sup> and St Petronilla,<sup>6</sup> as St Paul had for Timothy<sup>7</sup> and St Thecla.<sup>8</sup> St Gregory

<sup>1</sup> St John xxi. 20, "Vidit illum discipulum, quem diligebat Jesus."

<sup>2</sup> St John xi. 36, "Ecce quomodo amabat eum."

<sup>3</sup> St John xi. 5, "Diligebat autem Jesus Martham."

<sup>4</sup> St John xx. 16, "Dicit ei Jesus: Maria."

<sup>5</sup> St Pet. iv. 13, "Marcus, filius meus."

<sup>6</sup> "Petronillæ fil. dulcissimæ"—Inscr. on sarcophagus from Cem. of Domitilla; cp. Pref. note, p. 13.

<sup>7</sup> 1 Tim. i. 2, "Timotheo dilecto filio."

<sup>8</sup> "The youth went to buy bread, and there saw Thecla

Nazianzen boasts a hundred times of the unique friendship which he enjoyed with the great St Basil, and describes it in this way: "It seemed that in one and the other of us there was but one soul bearing two bodies. If we may not believe those who say that all things are in all things, yet you must believe that we were both in one, and one in the other; one only purpose we both had to cultivate virtue, and to fit the designs of our life to the hope of the future, thus leaving this mortal life before dying."<sup>1</sup> St Augustine bears witness that St Ambrose had a unique love for St Monica, because of the rare virtues which he saw in her; and that she had a mutual affection for him as an angel of God.<sup>2</sup>

But I am wrong in taking up your time about so clear

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their neighbour. He wondered, and said, 'Thecla, whither goest thou?' She says to him, 'I am going after Paul, because I have been saved from the fire.' And the youth said, 'Come, I will lead you to him, for he is distraught, and sighs and grieves, and it is now six days that he fasts and prays of God for thee'" (Acts of Thecla, chap. 24: Conybeare's "Monuments of Early Christianity"; cp. Pref., note, p. 13).

<sup>1</sup> "Una utrique anima videbatur duo corpora ferens. Quod si fides iis minime habenda est qui omnia in omnibus sita esse dicunt; at nobis certe credendum est quod uterque in altero et apud alterum siti eramus. Unum utrique opus et studium virtus erat, et ad futuras spes vivere, nosque ita comparare ut ante discessum ex hac vita, hinc migraremus" ("St Greg. Naz. Orat. xx. p. 330).

<sup>2</sup> "Diligebat Monica Ambrosium sicut angelum Dei. . . . Eam vero ille, propter ejus religiosissimam conversationem, qua in bonis operibus tam fervens spiritu frequentabat Ecclesiam; ita ut sæpe erumperet cum me videret, in ejus prædicationem, gratulans mihi quod talem matrem haberem" (St Aug. Conf. vi. 1-2, t. i. 119, 120).

a matter. St Jerome,<sup>1</sup> St Augustine,<sup>2</sup> St Gregory,<sup>3</sup> St Bernard,<sup>4</sup> and all the great servants of God, have had very particular friendships without prejudice to their perfection. St Paul, reproving the disorders of the Gentiles, accuses them of being without affection, that is, of having no friendship at all. And St Thomas, and indeed all good philosophers, confess that friendship is a virtue.<sup>6</sup> Now he is speaking of

<sup>1</sup> "Sed quid agimus? Matris prohibitori lachrymas, ipsi plangimus. Confiteor affectus meos, totus hic liber fletibus scribitur. Flevit et Jesus Lazarum, quia amabat illum" (St Jerome, Ep. xxii., "ad Paulam super obitu Blesillæ filiæ").

Cf. Ep. xxxv., Epitaphium Nepotiani: "Nepotianus meus, tuus, noster, imo Christi." Ep. lxxxvi., Epit. Paulæ, "Vitalia loquor, secundum animum meum, et omnium sororum ac fratrum desiderium, qui illam diligimus, et absentem quærimus."

<sup>2</sup> "Alypium fratrem cordis mei" (St Aug., Conf. ix. 7).

<sup>3</sup> St Gregory, when himself ill, writes to Marinianus, Bishop of Ravenna, formerly a monk at St Andrew's, who was suffering from some kind of hæmorrhage: "Et ideo videtur mihi ut . . . tua fraternitas ad me ante æstivum tempus debeat venire: ut ægritudinis tuæ ego specialiter in quantum valeo, curam geram, quietem tuam custodiam: quia huic ægritudini æstivum tempus medici vehementer dicunt periculosum, et valde pertimesco, ne si curas aliquas cum adversitate temporis habueris, amplius ex eadem molestia pericliteris. Ego enim ipse valde sum debilis; et omnino valde est utile, ut cum Dei gratia sanus, ad tuam redeas Ecclesiam" (Baron. Annal. ann. 601).

<sup>4</sup> St Bernard writes to Rainaldus, Abbot of Foigny: "Dilectissimo suo Rainaldo, Bernardus ejus non Pater aut dominus, sed Frater et conservus, quod fratri carissimo et fideli conservo." "Alioquin quando ego te comitem mihi carissimum valdeque necessarium . . . paterer longi fieri a me, si non esset Christus in causa" (St Bernard, Ep. lxxii. t. i. 73, 74).

<sup>5</sup> Rom. i. 31, "sine affectione."

<sup>6</sup> "Philosophus in Ethic. non negat amicitiam esse virtutem: sed dicit quod est virtus, vel cum virtute. Posset

particular friendship, since he says perfect friendship cannot extend to many persons. Perfection, therefore, does not consist in having no friendship at all, but in having none at all except what is good and holy and sacred.<sup>1</sup>

## CHAPTER XX

*Of the Difference between True and Vain Friendships.*

GIVE heed, therefore, to this important warning, dear Philothea. The honey of Heraclea,<sup>2</sup> which is so poisonous, is like the other which is so wholesome. There is great danger of taking one for the other, or of taking them mixed, for the good of the one would not hinder the harm of the other. We must be on our guard lest we be deceived by these friendships, specially when they are contracted between persons of different sexes, under whatever pretext it may be, for very often Satan deludes those who love. We commence by virtuous love, but unless we are very wise frivolous love will mingle with it, then sexual love, then carnal love. Yes, there is even danger in spiritual love, if we are not on our guard, though in this it may be more difficult to be mistaken, because its

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enim dici, quod est virtus moralis circa operationes, quæ sunt ad alium" (St Thom. Summ. 2<sup>a</sup>, 2<sup>no</sup>, qu. 23, art. 3 ad 1<sup>um</sup>).

<sup>1</sup> "La bonté de son cœur, sa douceur . . . lui avaient acquis un grand nombre d'amis à Rome, à Paris, à la cour de France, dans la Savoie . . . on peut dire que les personnes qui lui étaient les plus chères étaient Jean-Pierre Camus, évêque de Belley, le sieur Deshayes, la mère de Chantal et sa belle-sœur la baronne de Thorens" (Marsollier, "Esprit," § 17).

<sup>2</sup> Cf. chap. xvii. note.

purity and whiteness renders more recognisable the stains which Satan wishes to mix with it. This is why, when he attempts it, he does it more artfully, and tries to introduce impurities almost insensibly.

You will know worldly friendship from that which is holy and virtuous in the same way as the honey of Heraclea is known from the others. The honey of Heraclea is sweeter to the tongue than ordinary honey because of the aconite, which gives it an increase of sweetness ; and worldly friendship ordinarily produces a great amount of honeyed words, the flattering of little impassioned sayings, of praises drawn from beauty, grace, and sensual qualities. But sacred friendship has a language which is simple and frank ; it can only praise the virtue and grace of God, the unique foundation on which it rests. The honey of Heraclea, when it is swallowed, produces a dizziness of the head, and false friendship provokes a turning of the spirit which makes a person stagger in chastity and devotion, leading him to indulge in affected, fond, and immoderate looks, in sensual caresses, in inordinate sighs, in little complaints of not being loved, in little dainty, engaging glances, gallantry, a running after kisses, and other familiarities and unmannerly favours, certain and indubitable tokens of the coming ruin of modesty. But holy friendship has only simple and modest eyes, only free and frank caresses, only sighs for heaven, only familiarities for the Spirit, only complains when God is not loved—infallible signs of modesty. The honey of Heraclea disturbs the sight, and this worldly friendship disturbs the judgment, so that those who are affected by it think that they are doing well when they are doing wrong, and imagine that their excuses, their pretexts, and their works are sound sense. They fear the light, and love the darkness ; but holy friendship

has its eyes wide open and does not hide itself, but appears willingly before good men. In short, the honey of Heraclea leaves a very bitter taste in the mouth. So also do these false friendships. They lead to words and requests which are carnal and loathsome; or, in case of refusal, to injuries, calumnies, imposture, sadness, confusion, and jealousy, which themselves end very often in stupidity and rage. But chaste friendship is always alike modest, courteous, and delightful, and only changes into a more perfect and purer union of spirits, a lively image of the blessed friendship which is practised in Heaven.

St Gregory Nazianzen says that the peacock, when it utters its cry and spreads its tail and shows itself off, excites the hens who listen to it to a great amount of wantonness.<sup>1</sup> When you see a man showing himself off, and giving himself airs, and in like manner coaxing, whispering, chattering in the ears of a woman or a girl, without any idea of an honourable marriage—ah! without doubt it is only to provoke her to some wantonness, and the honest woman will stop her ears so as not to hear the cry of this peacock, and the voice of the enchanter who artfully wishes to charm her. But if she listen, O God, how bad an augury it is of the future loss of her heart.

Young people who make faces and eyes, and fondle one another, or say words which they would not wish their fathers, mothers, husbands, wives, or confessors to hear, bear witness by this that they are dealing with something else than honour and conscience. Our Lady was troubled<sup>2</sup> when she saw an Angel in human

<sup>1</sup> "Pavonem memorant prae fastu cum explicat alas  
Gemmantes, collum et stellifer aureolum;  
Clanjore ad se accire suo Venerem."

St Greg. Naz. Carm. lxiii. t. ii. p. 148.

<sup>2</sup> St Luke i. 29, "Quae cum audisset, turbata est in sermone ejus."

form, because She was alone, and because he gave Her excessive though heavenly praise. O Saviour of the world, purity is afraid of an Angel in human form, and why then will not impurity be afraid of a man, though he has the figure of an Angel, when he praises her with sensual and human praises?

## CHAPTER XXI

### *Counsels and Remedies against Evil Friendships*

**B**UT what are the remedies against this brood and swarm of foolish loves, wantonness, and impurities? As soon as you feel the faintest touch of them, turn short round the other way, and with an absolute horror of such vanity, run to the Saviour's Cross, and take His crown of thorns to encircle your heart, that these little foxes<sup>1</sup> may not approach you. Take good care you make no terms of any kind with them. Do not say, I will listen to him, but will not do anything he says; I will lend him my ear, but will refuse him my heart. O my dear Philothea, for God's sake, be strict with yourself on such occasions. The heart and the ears depend one on the other, and as it is impossible to check a torrent which has begun its descent on the slope of a mountain, so is it difficult to prevent love when it has dropt into the ear from falling swiftly into the heart. Goats, according to Alcmaeon, breathe through their ear, and not through the nose, though it is true that Aristotle denies it.<sup>2</sup> Now I do not know

<sup>1</sup> Cant. ii. 15, "Capite nobis vulpes parvulas, quae demoliuntur vineas."

<sup>2</sup> "Auris pars capitis qua audimus est ita ut nulla spiratio desideretur. Errat enim Alcmaeon qui capras spirare per aures credidit" (Arist. Hist. Animal. i. 11).

that it is so, but yet I know well that our heart breathes through the ear, and that as it aspires and breathes forth its thoughts through the tongue, it breathes in also through the ear, and through it receives the thought of others. Let us guard our ears carefully from the atmosphere of foolish words, for otherwise our heart will be suddenly infected by it. Listen to no propositions of any kind under any pretext whatever. In this case alone there is no danger in being uncivil and boorish.

Remember that you have dedicated your heart to God, and that your love has been sacrificed to Him. It would, therefore, be sacrilege to deprive Him of the least bit. Rather offer Him once again a thousand resolutions and protestations, and holding fast to these, as a stag in its hold, call upon God. He will help you, and His love will take you under its protection, that you may live only for Him.

But if you are already caught in the snares of these foolish loves, O God, what difficulty you will have in disengaging yourself? Place yourself before His Divine Majesty, understand in His presence the greatness of your misery, your weakness and vanity, then with the greatest possible effort of your heart, detest the love which has already begun, abjure the mean profession of it which you have made, renounce all the promises you have received. And with a strong and steadfast will, check your heart, and resolve no more to enter upon these sports and advances of love.

If you are able to remove yourself from the object, I would very much approve of it. For as those who have been bitten by serpents cannot easily be cured while they are in the presence of those who are wounded by the same bite; so the person who has been stung by love will be healed

with difficulty of this passion as long as he is near another who has been pierced by the same sting. The change of place is a great help in quieting the ardour and anxiety, whether of pain or of love. The Boy of whom St Ambrose speaks, in his second book on Penitence, who had made a long voyage and returned entirely freed from the foolish love he had practised, was so much changed that the silly woman who was in love with him, when she met him, said to him: "Do you not know me? I am indeed the same as I was." "Yes, indeed," he replied; "but I am not the same as I was."<sup>1</sup> Absence had brought to him this happy change. St Augustine also says that to alleviate the pain which he suffered on the death of his friend, he left Tagaste where he had died, and went away to Carthage.<sup>2</sup>

But what ought he to do who is not able to go away? All particular conversation must be absolutely stopped, all secret intercourse, all gentle looks of the eyes, all smiles, and in general all kinds of communications and allurements which can keep alive this loathsome and heady fire; or at most, if we are forced to speak to our companion, it must be to declare, with a bold, brief, and severe protest, the eternal separation we have vowed. I cry aloud to any one who has fallen into these snares of wanton love, cut them, lop them, break them. You must not try

<sup>1</sup> "Postea veteri occurrisse dilectae, quae ubi se non interpellavit, mirata putaverit non recognitam, rursus occurrens dixerit: 'Ego sum; responderit ille': Sed ego non sum ego" (St Ambr. De Pen. ii. 96, t. ii. 437).

<sup>2</sup> "Quo dolore contenebratum est cor meum! et quidquid aspiciebam, mors erat. . . . Et fugi de patria: minus enim eum quaerebant oculi mei, ubi videre non solebant atque a 'Tagastensi oppido veni Carthaginem'" (St Aug. Conf. iv. chap. iv. 7).

to loosen them, you must destroy them altogether. You must not only undo the bonds, you must break them or cut them, and the more so as these cords and bonds have no value. You must in no way have any consideration for a love which is so contrary to the love of God.

But after I have thus broken the chains of this infamous bondage, there will still remain some feeling of it, and the marks and traces of the iron will still remain impressed upon my feet, that is, in my affections. They will not do so, Philothea, if you have conceived as much contempt for your evil as it deserves. For if that is so, you will no longer be troubled by any movement but that of an excessive horror of this infamous love, and of all that comes from it. And you will remain free from any other affection towards the object you have abandoned except that of the purest charity for God's sake. But if, because of the imperfection of your repentance, there still remain in you some evil inclinations, seek out for your soul mental solitude, in the manner in which I have already instructed you,<sup>1</sup> and withdraw yourself into it as much as you can, and by a thousand reiterated ejaculations of the spirit, renounce all your inclinations, disown them with all your strength. Read more than ever some holy books, confess yourself more than usual, and make your communion. Speak humbly and simply of all the suggestions and temptations in this matter with your director, if you can, or at least with some faithful and prudent friend. And do not doubt that God will set you free from all passions provided you continue faithful in these exercises.

Ah ! you will say, but is it not ingratitude to break a friendship so pitilessly ? O, how blessed is the

<sup>1</sup> Part ii. chap. xii.

ingratitude which makes us acceptable to God! No! In God's name, Philothea, this will not be ingratitude, but a great benefit which you will confer on your lover. For in breaking your bond, you will break his, since they are common to you both. And though for the time he may not perceive his happiness, he will recognise it soon afterwards, and will sing as an act of thanksgiving, "O Lord, Thou hast broken my bonds, I will offer Thee the sacrifice of praise, and call upon Thy Holy Name."<sup>1</sup>

## CHAPTER XXII

### *Some Further Counsels on the Subject of Friendships*

FRIENDSHIP requires much intercourse between those who love, otherwise it can neither be born nor exist. This is why it often happens that with the intercourse which friendship gives, intercourse of several other kinds pass and glide insensibly from heart to heart by a mutual inspiration, and reciprocal flow of affections, of inclinations, and of impressions. But above all, this happens when we value highly the person we love; for then we so open our heart to his friendship, that with it his inclinations and impressions enter easily as a whole, whether they be good or whether they be bad. It is true, the bees which gather the honey of Heraclea<sup>2</sup> only seek for honey, but with the honey they suck insensibly the poisonous qualities of the aconite on which they gather their honey. Now, therefore, Philothea, we ought in this

<sup>1</sup> Ps. cxv. 16-17, "Dirupisti vincula mea: tibi sacrificabo hostiam laudis, et nomen Domini invocabo" (A.V. Ps. cxvi.).

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Chap. xvii.

matter to put thoroughly in practice the word which the Saviour of our souls was wont to use, as indeed the fathers have taught us: "Be ye good changers of money";<sup>1</sup> that is to say, do not receive false coin with the good, nor base with the fine gold. Separate the precious from the valueless,<sup>2</sup> yes! for there is scarcely any one who has not some imperfection. And why, indeed, should we receive pell-mell the tares and the imperfections of a friend with his friendship? We must indeed love him, notwithstanding his imperfection, but we must neither love nor receive his imperfections, for friendship requires the intercourse of that which is good, not of that which is evil. Therefore as those who sift the gravel of the Tagus separate from it the gold which they find there and leave the sand on the bank, so those who enjoy the intercourse of some good friendship ought to separate the sand of imperfections and not leave it to enter their souls. Indeed, St Gregory Nazianzen states that several of those who loved and admired St Basil allowed themselves to be carried away so far as to imitate him, not only in his outward imperfections, but in his slow method of speaking, in his abstract and pensive spirit, in the shape of his beard, and in his gait.<sup>3</sup> And we

<sup>1</sup> St Jer. Ep. ad Minerviam et Alexandrum: "Estote probati nummularii" (T. iv. part i. 220).

<sup>2</sup> Jer. xv. 15, "Si separaveris pretiosum a vili."

<sup>3</sup> "Tanta Basilii virtus gloriaeque praestantia fuit, ut multa etiam ex parvis illius virtutibus, atque adeo ex corporeis imperfectis, ab aliis, ad gloriam nominisque claritatem parandam excogitata sint: cujus generis sunt pallor, barba, certus incedendi modus, tum etiam ad loquendum minime promptum esse, sed ut plurimum cogitabundum, atque intro collectum, id quod multi non vecte imitantes, in odiosam quandam tristitiam inciderunt" (St Greg. Naz. Orat. xx. t. i. 370).

see husbands, wives, children, friends, who while they hold in great esteem their friends, their fathers, their husbands and their wives, acquire either by deference or by imitation a thousand little evil humours from the intercourse of the friendship which they hold one with another. Now this ought not to be, for everyone has plenty of these evil inclinations without overcharging himself with those of others. And not only does friendship not require it, but it obliges us, on the contrary, to do what we can to help each other to be delivered from imperfections of all kinds. We must doubtless bear gently with a friend in his imperfections, but not support him in them, and still less transfer them to ourselves.

But I only speak of imperfections, for as to sins, we must neither bear them nor assist them in a friend. It is either a feeble or an evil friendship which sees a friend perish and does not in any way help him, and sees him dying of an abscess and does not use the lancet of correction to save him. True and living friendship cannot endure amid sin. It is said that the Salamander extinguishes the fire in which it lies,<sup>1</sup> and sin ruins the friendship in which it lodges. If it is a passing sin, friendship puts it quickly to flight by correction, but if it takes up its abode and remains, friendship perishes at once. For it can only live on true virtue. How much less then ought we to sin for the sake of friendship? A friend is an enemy when he wishes to lead us into sin, and deserves to lose our friendship when he wishes to lose and hurt a friend. But it is one of the surest signs of false friendship

<sup>1</sup> Nonnulla corpora esse animalium quae igne non absumantur, Salamandra claro documento est, quae, ut aiunt, ignem, inambulans per eum, exstinguit" (Arist. Hist. Animal. v. 19).

when it is seen to be exercised towards a vicious person, of whatever kind the sin may be. If he whom we love is vicious, without doubt our friendship is vicious, for since it cannot have any regard for real virtue, it must necessarily look to some wanton virtue, some sensual quality.

Society formed for some temporal profit among tradesmen has only the figure of true friendship, for it is formed, not for the love of anyone, but for the love of gain.

In fact, these two divine sayings are, as it were, two large columns for the strengthening of the Christian life. One is the saying of the wise man: "He who fears God, will likewise enjoy a good friendship."<sup>1</sup> The other is from St James: "The friendship of this world is enmity against God."<sup>2</sup>

## CHAPTER XXIII

### *Of the Exercises of Outward Mortification*

THOSE who treat of the things of the country and the field assure us that if we write some word on an almond which is quite whole and put it back in the shell, folding it and closing it properly and planting it in this way, all the fruit of the tree which grows from it will be found inscribed and engraved with the same word. As for me, Philothea, I have never been able to approve of the method of those who, when they are

<sup>1</sup> Ecclus. vi. 17, "Qui timet Deum, aequè habebit amicitiam bonam."

<sup>2</sup> St Jas. iv. 4, "Adulteri, nescitis quia amicitia hujus mundi, inimica est Dei."

going to reform a man, begin with the outward part—with his face, with his clothes, with his hair.<sup>1</sup>

It seems to me, on the contrary, that we ought to begin with the inward part. “Turn unto me,” saith God, “with all your heart”;<sup>2</sup> “my child, give me thine heart.”<sup>3</sup> For the heart being the source of our actions, they are the same as it is. The Divine Bridegroom when inviting the soul, says: “Set me as a seal on thine heart, as a seal upon thine arm.”<sup>4</sup> Yes, indeed, for whosoever has Jesus Christ in his heart, has Him soon afterwards in all his outward actions. This is why, dear Philothea, I have wished before all things to engrave and inscribe on your heart this holy and sacred word, “Glory be to Jesus,”<sup>5</sup> assured, as I am, that afterward your life, which springs forth from your heart as an almond tree from its nut, will bring forth all the actions, which are its fruit, written and engraven with the same word of salvation. And as Jesus in His sweetness will live within your heart, He will live also in all your behaviour, and will appear in your eyes, in your mouth, in your hands, yes, even in your hair, and you will be able to say most reverently, in imitation of St Paul: “I live, yet not I, but Jesus Christ liveth in me.”<sup>6</sup> In short, he who has gained the heart of a man

<sup>1</sup> “On l’a plusieurs fois employé dans les entreprises des réformes conventuelles; mais sa méthode était d’aller doucement en besogne et à pas de plomb, pratiquant cette devise qu’il estimait beaucoup, de se hâter tout bellement. Il voulait qu’en toutes choses on fît peu et bien. Son grand mot était, *Pedentetim*” (“*L’Esprit*,” pt. x. § 7).

<sup>2</sup> Joel ii. 12, “Convertimini ad me in toto corde vestro.”

<sup>3</sup> Prov. xxiii. 26, “Praebe fili mi cor tuum mihi.”

<sup>4</sup> Cant. viii. 6, “Pone me ut signaculum super cor tuum, ut signaculum super brachium tuum.”

<sup>5</sup> “Vive Jésus!” Cf. note on Dedicatory Prayer.

<sup>6</sup> Gal. ii. 20, “Vivo autem, jam non ego: vivit vero in me Christus.”

has gained the whole man. But the heart itself, with which we wish to begin, requires instructing as to the way in which it should follow its outward course and habit, that not only may holy devotion be seen in it, but also great wisdom and discretion. To this end I am going briefly to give you some counsels.

If you can bear fasting, you will do well to fast on some days beyond the fasts which the Church has commanded ; for besides the ordinary effect of fasting, the raising up of the spirit, the keeping down of the flesh, the practice of virtue, and the gaining of a great reward in heaven, it is a very good thing to keep possession of the power of mastering gluttony itself, and of holding the sensual appetite and the body subject to the law of the spirit ; and though we do not fast much, yet the enemy fears us more when he recognises that we know how to fast. Wednesdays, Fridays,<sup>1</sup> and Saturdays<sup>2</sup> are the days on which the ancient Christians most practised abstinence. Take them as an example for fasting, so far as your devotion and the discretion of your director will counsel you to do it.

I would willingly say, as St Jerome said to the good lady Leta : “ Long and immoderate fasts displease me very much, especially in those who are still of a tender age. I have learnt by experience that a young ass when tired on the way tries to wander ”<sup>3</sup> : that is to say,

<sup>1</sup> “ Cur stationibus quartam et sextam sabbati dicamus ? ” (Tert. de jejunio, ch. xiv.).

<sup>2</sup> “ Et de die quidem sabbati facilius causa est, quia et Romana jejunit ecclesia, et aliae nonnullae, etiamsi paucae ” (St Aug. Ep. xxxvi. ad Casulanum, § 26, t. ii. 78).

“ Quando hic sum, non jejunio sabbato ; quando Romae sum, jejunio sabbato ” (St Ambr. ap. St Aug. Ep. xxxvi. ad Cas. § 32, t. ii. 81).

<sup>3</sup> “ Displicent mihi, in teneris maxime aetatibus, longa et immoderata jejunia, in quibus junguntur hebdomades, et oleum

young people who have become weak through excess of fasting easily turn aside to delicacies. Stags run badly at two seasons, both when they are heavily weighted with venison and when they are too thin. We are specially exposed to temptations when our body is too well fed and when it is too faint ; for one makes it insolent in its comfort, and the other makes it depressed in its discomfort. And as we cannot bear it when it is too fat, so it cannot bear us when it is too lean. The lack of this moderation in fasting, discipline, sackcloth, and hardness, renders useless for the service of charity the best years of many people, as it did in the case of St Bernard,<sup>1</sup> who repented that he had practised too much austerity ; and whereas they have treated the body badly at the beginning, they are forced to flatter it at the end. Would they not have done better to have given it fair treatment, proportioned to the office and the labour to which their position bind them.

Fasting and work mortify and bring under the flesh. If the work which you do is necessary or very useful to the glory of God, I would rather you suffer the toil of working than that of fasting. This is the feeling of the Church, which for useful works done in the service of God and their neighbour, dispenses those who do them from fasting, even when it is enjoined. One has the toil in fasting, another has it in minis-

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*in cibo ac poma vetantur. Experimento didici, asellum in via quum lassus fuerit, diverticula quaerere*" (St Jer. Ep. lvii. ad Laetam. t. iv. p. ii. 595).

<sup>1</sup> " Quid autem eum nitimur excusare, in quo ipse qui veretur omnia opera sua, non confunditur usque hodie se accusare, sacrilegii arquens semetipsum, quod servitio Dei et fratrum abstulerit corpus suum, dum indiscreto fervore imbecille illud reddiderit, ac paene inutile " (Vit. St Bern. Lib. i. ch. viii. § 41).

tering to the sick, visiting prisoners, confessing, preaching, helping the desolate, praying, and other similar practices. This toil is worth more than the other. For besides mortifying us to a like extent, it has fruits far more desirable.<sup>1</sup> And speaking generally, it is better to take more care of the bodily forces than is requisite, than to raise them more than is necessary. For we can always bring them under when we wish, we cannot always restore them when we wish.<sup>2</sup>

I think we ought to hold in deep reverence the saying which our Saviour and Redeemer, Jesus Christ, spoke to His disciples: "Eat what is set before you."<sup>3</sup> It is (as I believe) a greater virtue to eat without choice what is set before you, and to take it also in the same order as it is set before you, whether it be according to your taste or not, than to choose always the worst. For though this latter way of living seems more austere, yet the other has in it more resignation, for by it we not only give up our taste but our choice. Thus it is no small austerity to turn our taste every way, and to hold it subject to occasion. Added to this, mortification of this kind makes no show, inconveniences no one, and is specially fitting for civil life. To put back one dish

<sup>1</sup> "All fasting is to be used with prudence and charity: for there is no end to which fasting serves, but may be obtained by other instruments, and therefore it must at no hand be made an instrument of scruple, or become an enemy to our health" (Jer. Taylor, *Holy Living*, chap. iv. § 5).

<sup>2</sup> "Having this in our first care, that we secure our virtue, and next that we secure our health, that we may the better exercise the labours of virtue, lest out of too much austerity we bring ourselves to that condition that it is necessary to be indulgent to softness, ease, and extreme tenderness" (Jer. Taylor, *Holy Living*, chap. iv. § 5).

<sup>3</sup> St Luke x. 8, "Manducate quae apponuntur vobis."

to take another, to pick and scrape at everything, to find nothing well prepared or well cleaned, to make a mystery of every mouthful, this betokens a heart soft and attentive to dishes and basins. I think more of St Bernard's drinking oil instead of water or wine, than if he had drunk the water of wormwood on purpose,<sup>1</sup> for it was a sign that he did not think what he was drinking. And in this indifference as to what we ought to eat and what we ought to drink lies the perfection of the practice of this sacred saying: "Eat what is set before you." I make an exception, however, of meats which are hurtful to the health, and disorder the spirit, such as hot and spiced meats do to many by affecting the head and stomach, on certain occasions when nature has need of being refreshed and helped to carry through some work for the glory of God. A regular and moderate sobriety is better than violent abstinence practised by fits and starts, and mixed with great laxity.<sup>2</sup>

Discipline has a wonderful power in awaking the appetite of devotion when it is taken moderately. Sackcloth mortifies the body effectively, but it is not usually suitable, either for married persons, for delicate constitutions, or for those who have to bear great trouble. It is true that on days specially devoted to penitence, it may be used with the advice of a discreet confessor.

<sup>1</sup> "A primis fere annis, sic evasit illecebras gulæ, ut ipsam quoque saporum discretionem ex magna parte perdidit. Quoties pia sibi ministrantium fraude deceptus, liquores pro aliis alios sumpsit? Nam et oleum sibi per errorem aliquando propinatum bibit, et penitus ignoravit" (Vit. St Bern. Lib. iii. chap. i. 2).

<sup>2</sup> "Let not intemperance be the Prologue or the Epilogue to your fast, lest the fast be so farre from taking off anything of the sin, that it be an occasion to increase it" (Jer. Taylor, Holy Living, chap. iv. § 5).

We should use the night for sleep, each according to our constitution, so far as is requisite for our being carefully awake during the day. And because the holy Scriptures in a hundred ways, the example of the Saints, and natural causes highly commend the morning as the best and most fruitful part of our days, and because our Lord Himself is called the "Sun arising,"<sup>1</sup> and our Lady the "Dawn of Day,"<sup>2</sup> I think it is a virtuous practice to take our sleep at an early hour in the evening, so as to be able to be awake and get up early in the morning. Indeed, this hour is the most agreeable, the sweetest, and the freest. The birds themselves provoke us in this hour to wake up and give our praises to God, so that early rising is helpful both to health and to holiness.

Balaam, mounted on his Ass, went to find Balak, but because he had not a right intention, the Angel met him in the way with a sword in his hand to kill him. The Ass, when he saw the Angel, stopped three several times, as if restive. Balaam, however, struck her cruelly with his stick to make her go on, until, on the third occasion, she sat down altogether under Balaam and spoke to him by a great miracle, and said: "What have I done that thou hast already beaten me these three times?" And soon after, the eyes

<sup>1</sup> Mal. iv. 2, "Et orietur vobis timentibus nomen meum Sol justitiæ." St Luke i. 78, "Oriens ex alto."

<sup>2</sup> Cant. vi. 9, "Quæ est ista, quæ progreditur quasi aurora consurgens?"

"Sicut aurora valde rutilens in mundo progressa es, ô Maria, quando veri Solis splendorem tantæ sanctitatis jubare præcucuristi. Ipse enim Sol justitiæ de te processurus ortum suum quadam matutina irradiatione præveniens, in te lucis suæ radios copiose transfudit" (Ecberti abbatis schonaugien-sis ad B. V. Deiparam Serm. Panegyricus: St Bern. Op. vol. ii. 689).

of Balaam were opened, and he saw the Angel. And the Angel said to him: "Why hast thou beaten thine ass? If she had not turned from before me, I should have killed thee and saved her alive." Then Balaam said to the Angel: "Lord, I have sinned, for I did not know that thou hadst placed thyself against me in the way."<sup>1</sup> You see, Philothea, Balaam is the cause of the evil, and he strikes and beats the poor ass, who cannot help it. And it happens very frequently in this way in our affairs. For this woman sees her husband or her child ill, and at once flies to fasting, to sackcloth, to discipline, as David did in a similar case.<sup>2</sup> Alas, my dear friend, you beat your poor ass, you afflict your body, and yet your trouble is not its fault, nor is it for this that God has His sword drawn against you. Correct your heart which idolizes your husband, and has permitted a thousand faults in the child, and destined him to pride, to vanity, and to ambition. This man sees that he often falls heavily into the sin of luxury. Inward remorse comes against his conscience, sword in hand, to pierce it through with a holy fear. And at once, his heart coming to itself, he says: "Ah! rebellious flesh! Ah! disloyal body! thou hast betrayed me!" And immediately he begins to fall upon this flesh with hard blows, with immoderate fasts, with unmeasured discipline, with insupportable sackcloth. O poor soul! If thy flesh could speak like Balaam's ass, it would say to thee: "Why dost thou strike me, wretch! It is against thee, O my soul, that God's vengeance is in arms. It

<sup>1</sup> Num. xxii. 28, "Aperuit Dominus os asinae, et locuta est: Quid feci tibi? car percutis me? ecce jam tertio?"

<sup>2</sup> 2 Kings (2 Sam.) xii. 16, "Deprecatusque est David Dominum pro parvulo: et jejunavit David jejuniis, et ingressus seorsum, jacuit super terram."

is thou who art the criminal. Why didst thou lead me into bad company? Why didst thou apply my eyes, my hand, my lips to lasciviousness? Why didst thou trouble me with evil imaginations? Cherish good thoughts, and I shall not have evil dispositions. Keep company with modest people, and I shall not be at all disturbed with lust. Alas! It is thou who throwest me into the fire, and thou dost not wish me to burn. Thou throwest smoke in my eyes, and thou dost not wish them to burst into flame. And God without doubt says to you in such a case, Beat, break, rend, crush your heart more particularly, for it is against it that My wrath is kindled. To heal itching there is not so much need of washing and bathing, as of purifying the blood and refreshing the liver; so to heal ourselves of our vices, it is indeed good to mortify the flesh; but it is above all things necessary to purify our affections and refresh our hearts. And, every way, we should never undertake bodily austerities without the advice of our guide.<sup>1</sup>

## CHAPTER XXIV

*Of Society and of Solitude.*

SEEK society, and shun it: these are the two extremes to be blamed in the devotion of those who live in the world, which is that of which I am speaking to you. To shun it savours of disdain and contempt of our neighbour; to seek it is a sign of

<sup>1</sup> "Le corps accoutumé à la bonne chère et à la mollesse doit être mortifié par les jeûnes, par les disciplines, par les cilices, par les veilles, et par toutes sortes d'austérités, sans néanmoins passer les bornes de la discrétion, ne de l'obéissance" ("Combat Spirituel," chap. xix.).

sloth and idleness.<sup>1</sup> "We should love our neighbour as ourselves."<sup>2</sup> To show that we love him, we ought not to avoid being with him; and to bear witness that we love ourselves, we ought to rest in ourselves when we are by ourselves. Now when we are by ourselves we are alone. "Think of thyself," says St Bernard, "and then of others."<sup>3</sup> If, then, nothing presses you to go out into company or to receive it at home, remain within yourself, and hold intercourse with your own heart. But if company come to you, or any just cause invite you to go out, go in God's name, Philothea, and see your neighbour with a good heart and cheerful face.

But society is called evil which is formed for certain evil intentions, or when those who hold intercourse among themselves are vicious, indiscreet, and dissolute. And for this reason we should turn away from them, as bees turn from the company of gadflies and hornets. For as those who have been bitten by mad dogs have their sweat, their breath, and their spittle dangerous, especially for children and people of a delicate constitution, so those who are vicious and dissolute can only be visited with hazard and peril, especially by those who are still tender and delicate in devotion.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> "Omnia autem alia quinque, quæ ponit ex accidia oriri, pertinent ad evagationem mentis circa illiciter: quæ quidem . . . quantum ad locutionem, dicitur verbositas" (St Thom. Sum., 2<sup>a</sup>, 2<sup>ae</sup>, qu. 35, art. 4 ad 3<sup>um</sup>).

<sup>2</sup> "My duty towards my neighbour is to love him as myself" (English Church Catechism, 1549).

<sup>3</sup> "Si quod vivis et sapis, totum das actioni, considerationi nihil: laudo te? in hoc non laudo" (St Bern., "De consid.," i. 5, t. i. 411).

<sup>4</sup> "Avoid the company of Drunkards and busie-bodies, and all such as are apt to talk much to little purpose: for

There are some kinds of intercourse which are useless for anything except recreation, and which consist merely in relaxation from serious occupation. And as to these, though we must not give ourselves up to them, yet we may give them the leisure which is destined to recreation.<sup>1</sup>

There are other kinds of intercourse which have politeness for their end, such as friendly visits and certain entertainments which are given to honour our neighbours. And as to these, though we must not be over scrupulous in practising them, yet we must not be uncivil in despising them, we should modestly fulfil our duty in this matter, so as equally to avoid rudeness and levity.

There remains such useful intercourse as exists between devout and virtuous persons. O Philothea, it will always be a great advantage to you to cultivate such intercourse as this. The vines planted amongst olive trees have grapes which are fruitful and have the flavour of olives. A soul which is found frequently among virtuous people cannot fail to partake of their qualities. Drones alone cannot make honey, but in the company of bees they assist them in making it.<sup>2</sup> It is a great advantage to us in the practice of devotion to have intercourse with souls which are devout.

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no man can be provident of his time, that is not provident of his company" (Jeremy Taylor, "Holy Living," chap. i. § 1).

<sup>1</sup> "Let not your recreations be lavish spenders of your time, but choose such which are healthful, short, transient, recreative, and apt to refresh you; but at no hand dwell upon them, nor make them your great employment" (Jeremy Taylor, "Holy Living," chap. i. § 1).

<sup>2</sup> "Non in opere tantum, sed in foetu quoque fuci adjuvant apes, multum ad calorem conferente turba" (Plin. Hist. Nat., xi. 11).

In all intercourse, frankness, simplicity, gentleness, and modesty are always preferred. There are people whose behaviour and movements are so artificial that every one is wearied with it. And as a man who never walks without counting his steps, or talks without singing, is vexatious to most people, so those whose habits are artificial, and who do nothing except in step, are exceedingly disagreeable in company; indeed, in people of this kind there is a certain kind of presumption. As a rule, a moderate joy should always prevail in our intercourse. St Romuald<sup>1</sup> and St Antony<sup>2</sup> are much praised because, notwithstanding their austerities, they always had their face and their words adorned with joy, gaiety, and politeness. "Rejoice with them that do rejoice."<sup>3</sup> Once more I repeat to you with the Apostle: "Be always joyful, but in our Lord, that your modesty may appear unto all men."<sup>4</sup> To rejoice in our Lord, the

<sup>1</sup> "Cui (Ottoni juniore Imperatori) Romualdus quia magnum hospitem in parva domo suscepit, lectulum suum ad requiescendum dare dignatus est. Coopertorium autem Rex noluit, quia asperum judicavit."

St Romuald entered the monastery of St Apollinaris in Classe et Ravenna in 971. He left it for the life of an anchorite, and went to Gaul in 977. Later he withdrew to an island about twelve miles from Ravenna, where the above interview between him and the Emperor took place. He became Abbot of Classe ("Annal. Eccles. Bar.," t. x. ann. 996).

<sup>2</sup> "His countenance had a great and wonderful grace. . . . For as his soul was free from disturbances, his outward appearance was calm; so from the joy of his soul he possessed a cheerful countenance. . . . He was never downcast, for his mind was joyous" (St Athan., "Life of St Antony," chaps. 6, 7, Robertson, p. 214).

<sup>3</sup> Rom. xii. 15, "Gaudere cum gaudentibus."

<sup>4</sup> Phil. iv. 4-5, "Gaudete in Domino semper; iterum dico gaudete. Modestia vestra nota sit omnibus hominibus: Dominus prope est."

subject of our joy must be not only lawful but modest. I say this, because there are things lawful which are not modest; and that your modesty may appear, beware of rudeness, which without doubt is always culpable. To trip up this person, to blacken the face of another, to prick a third, to hurt a fool, are jokes and amusements which are foolish and intolerant.

But in addition to the mental solitude to which you can retire in the midst of the most important intercourse, as I have said above,<sup>1</sup> you ought always to love local and actual solitude, not indeed to go into deserts like St Mary of Egypt,<sup>2</sup> St Paul,<sup>3</sup> St Anthony,<sup>4</sup> Arsenius,<sup>5</sup> and other solitary Fathers, but to be sometimes in your room, in your garden, or elsewhere, where you may be better able, according to your own desire, to withdraw your spirit within your heart, and refresh your soul with good meditation and holy thoughts, or a little good reading, after the example of the great Bishop Nazianzen, who, speaking of himself, said: "I used to walk by myself at sunset, and pass the time on the sea-shore, for I was accustomed to make use of this recreation to refresh myself, and shake off some of my usual weariness."<sup>6</sup> And with these words he

<sup>1</sup> Part ii. chap. xii.

<sup>2</sup> Part ii. chap. xvii. note.

<sup>3</sup> Part ii. chap. xvii. note.

<sup>4</sup> St Antony died at the age of 105, in the year 358 ("Annales Eccles. Baron.," t. iii. ann. 358).

<sup>5</sup> Arsenius, a deacon of the Roman Church, was sent by Pope Damasus to the Emperor Theodosius to act as tutor to his son Arcadius. In 383 he fled into the Egyptian desert, and became noted for his great sanctity ("Annal. Eccles. Baron.," ann. 383).

<sup>6</sup> "Inambulabam ego solus, vergente jam in occasum sole. Locus porro in quo spatiabar, maris ripa erat. Soleo enim fere hujus modi oblectamentis labores dissolvere ac relaxare" (St Gregory Nazianzen, "Orat.," xxviii.).

speaks of the good thoughts that he had, as I have mentioned elsewhere.<sup>1</sup> You will also be following the example of St Ambrose, of whom St Augustine says that sometimes when he entered his room (for he refused admission to no one) he would see him reading and after waiting some time for fear of interrupting him, he would leave without saying a word, thinking that the little time which remained for this great Bishop to refresh and revive his spirit after the pressure of so many affairs ought not to be taken away from him.<sup>2</sup> Also, after the Apostles had one day told our Lord how they had preached and how much they had done, "Come," He said to them, "into a desert place, and rest awhile."<sup>3</sup>

## CHAPTER XXV

### *Of Decency in Dress.*

SAINT PAUL writes that devout women (he might have said men also) should dress decently, adorning themselves with modesty and sobriety.<sup>4</sup> Now decency in dress and other adornments depends on their material,

<sup>1</sup> Part ii. chap. xiii. note.

<sup>2</sup> "Sæpe eam adessemus, non enim vetabatur quisquam ingredi, aut ei venientem nuntiari mos erat; sic eum legentem vidimus tacite, et aliter nunquam: sedentesque in diuturno silentio (quis enim tam intento esse oneri auderet?) discedebamus, et conjectabamus eum parvo ipso tempore, quod reparandæ menti suæ nanciscebatur, feriatum ab strepitu causarum alienarum, nolle in aliud avocari" (St Aug., "Confess.," vi. 3, t. i. p. 121).

<sup>3</sup> St Mark vi. 31, "Venite seorsum in desertum locum, et requiescet pusillum."

<sup>4</sup> 1 Tim. ii. 9, "Similiter et mulieres in habitu ornato, cum verecundia et sobrietate ornantes se."

their form, and their neatness.<sup>1</sup> As to neatness, it ought nearly always to be the same in our clothes, and we ought to have no dirt or filth of any kind upon them. Outward neatness in some way represents inward modesty. God Himself requires bodily modesty in those who approach His altars and have the chief charge of devotion. As to the material and the form of dress, modesty is determined by the several considerations of time, of age, of quality, of company, of occasion. We dress as a rule better on festivals, according to the greatness of the day we celebrate. In seasons of penitence, such as Lent, we give up a good deal. At weddings we put on a wedding dress, at funerals we put on mourning. In the presence of princes we dress in state, and put it off amongst our servants. The married woman can and ought to adorn herself in the presence of her husband when he wishes it. If she does the same in his absence we ask what eyes she wishes to please with this special care. We allow girls to use more ornaments, because they may lawfully wish to please many persons, though this may only be to gain one by holy marriage. We do not think it at all wrong for widows of a marriageable state to dress provided they make no show of wantonness, for as they have been already mothers of a family, and have passed through the troubles of widowhood, their spirits are held to be mature and tempered. But as to real widows, who are widows not only in body but in heart, no ornament is suitable for them but humility, modesty, and devotion. For if they want to give love to men, they are not widows indeed. And if they do not wish to give it, why do they wear the trappings of love?

<sup>1</sup> "Be grave, decent, and modest in thy clothing and ornament: never let it be above thy condition, not alwaies equal to it" (Jeremy Taylor, "Holy Living," chap. ii. § 5).

He who does not wish to receive guests must remove the sign from his house. We always laugh at the old when they wish to give themselves airs; it is a folly which is supportable only with the young.

Be neat, Philothea; do not wear anything which drags or fits badly. It is a slight to those in whose company we are if we go amongst them in unseemly clothing. Beware specially of affectation, vanity, curiosity, and wantonness. Always keep as much as you can on the side of simplicity and modesty, for this is without doubt the chief ornament of beauty and the best excuse for ugliness. St Peter warns young women specially not to wear their hair crisped, frizzled, curled and twisted.<sup>1</sup> Men who are so foolish as to trifle with these follies are everywhere described as effeminate, and vain women are regarded as weak in chastity. At least if they have any it is not visible amid so much rubbish and trash. It is said that no evil is intended in these things; but I reply, as I have done elsewhere, that the devil thinks there is. For myself, I would that those of my own friends who are devout, whether men or women, should dress as well as any of the flock, but with the least pomp and affectation. And as it is said in the proverb, let them be adorned with grace, decency, and dignity.<sup>3</sup> St Louis said in one word that each one ought to dress according to his standing, so that the wise and good should not be able to say, "You do too much," nor the young people say "You do too little."<sup>4</sup> But in case the young do not

<sup>1</sup> 1 Pet. iii. 3, "Quarum non sit extrinsecus capillatura, at circumdatio auri."

<sup>2</sup> "Hermaphrodites."

<sup>3</sup> Eccles. xxvi. 19, 20, "Gratia super gratiam, mulier sancta et pudorata, omnis autem ponderatio non est digna continentis animæ."

<sup>4</sup> "Dicebat etiam, unumquemque debere se gerere, vestiri

wish to content themselves with decency, we must stay at the counsel of the wise.

# CHAPTER XXVI

*Of Speaking, and first of all how we ought to speak of God.*

PHYSICIANS derive much knowledge of the health and sickness of a man by looking at his tongue, and our words are a true indication of the quality of our souls. "By thy words," said the Saviour, "thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned."<sup>1</sup> We place our hand at once on the pain which we feel, and our tongue on the love which we have.

If, then, you really love God, Philothea, you will often speak of God in the familiar way in which you speak with your servants, your friends, and your neighbours. Yes, "for the mouth of the just will meditate on wisdom, and his tongue will speak of judgment."<sup>2</sup> And as bees never touch anything but honey with their little mouths, so your tongue will always use honeyed words of God, and will have no greater sweetness than to feel the praises and blessings of His name flow between your lips; as it is told of St Francis, that when he spoke the holy name of the Lord, he sucked

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et ornare secundum statum et conditionem suam, idque modo mediocri, ut homines probi, et maturi nequeant dicere, alterive exprobrare: Iste in eo nimius est: atque etiam, ne juniores dicant: Ille hujus parum facit" (Joinville, "Vita S. Lud.," part i. chap. i.).

<sup>1</sup> St Matt. xii. 37, "Ex verbis enim tuis justificaberis, et ex verbis tuis condemnaberis."

<sup>2</sup> Ps. xxxvi. 30, "Os justi meditabitur sapientiam, et lingua ejus loquetur judicium" (A.V., Ps. xxxvii.).

and licked his lips as if to draw from them the greatest sweetness in the world.<sup>1</sup>

But speak always of God as of God, that is to say, reverently and devoutly ; not in a pretentious or affected manner, but with a spirit of gentleness, of charity, and of humility, dropping as much as you can (as is said of the Bride in the Song of Songs <sup>2</sup>) the delicious honey of devotion and divine things drop by drop, sometimes into the ears of one, sometimes into the ears of another, praying God in the secret places of your heart that it will please Him to make this holy dew to pass into the hearts of those who listen to you.

Never therefore speak of God or of devotion in a perfunctory manner or for the sake of conversation, but always with attention and devotion. I say this to put away from you a remarkable kind of vanity which is found in many who make profession of devotion, who on every occasion speak holy and fervent words in a canting way, and without any thought of what they say. And after they have spoken, they think that they are such as their words betoken. And this they are not.

<sup>1</sup> "Psalmos cum tanta mentis ac spiritus attentione dicebat, quasi Deum presentem haberet: et cum nomen Domini in eis occurreret, præ suavitatis dulcedine labia sua lingere videbatur" (St Bonav., "Legend. St Franc.," chap. x.).

<sup>2</sup> Cant. iv. 11, "Favus distillans labia tua sponsa."

## CHAPTER XXVII

*Of Modesty<sup>1</sup> in our Words, and of the Respect we owe to Persons.*

“IF any one sin not in word,” says St James, “the same is a perfect man.”<sup>2</sup> Take great care that you do not give way to any immodest words.<sup>3</sup> For though you do not use them with a bad intention, yet those who hear them may take them in another way. An immodest word falling into a weak heart, extends and spreads out like a drop of oil on cloth, and sometimes takes such possession of the heart, that it fills it with a thousand lewd thoughts and temptations. For as the poison of the body enters through the mouth, so that of the heart enters through the ear. The tongue which produces it is murderous. Perchance the venom which it has thrown may not have taken effect because it has found the heart of its hearers fortified by some antidote, but it was not the fault of its malice that it did not cause them to die. And let no one tell me that he is not thinking about it, for the Lord, who knows our thoughts, has said: “The mouth speaks of the abundance of the heart.”<sup>4</sup> And if we are not thinking evil in it, the Evil one nevertheless weighs it well, and always secretly makes use of these evil words to pierce some

<sup>1</sup> “Honnêteté.”

<sup>2</sup> St Jas. iii. 2, “Si quis in verbo non offendit: hic perfectus est vir.”

<sup>3</sup> “To discourse chastly and purely, with great care declining all undecencies of language, chastening the tongue, and restraining it with grace, as vapours of wine are restrained with a bunch of myrrh” (Jeremy Taylor, “Holy Living,” chap. ii. § 2).

<sup>4</sup> St Matt. xii. 34, “Ex abundantia enim cordis os loquitur.”

person's heart with them. It is said that those who have eaten the herb called angelica always have their breath sweet and pleasant,<sup>1</sup> and those who have modesty and chastity, which is the angelic virtue in their heart, have their words always clean, kindly, and modest. As to things indecent and foolish, the Apostle wishes them not even to be named,<sup>2</sup> assuring us that nothing corrupts good manners so much as evil thoughts.<sup>3</sup>

If, then, immodest words are spoken aside with affectation and subtlety, they are infinitely more venomous. For as the more a javelin is pointed, the more easily it enters our body, so the more an evil word is whispered, the more it penetrates our hearts. And those who think themselves gentlemen by speaking such words in intercourse with others do not know why intercourse is formed. For they ought to be like swarms of bees who are met together to make honey of some gentle and virtuous intercourse, and not like a mass of wasps who come together to suck up some corruption. If some sot speaks to you words which are indecent, let him know that your ears are offended at it, either by turning another way, or by some other means, as your prudence will guide you.

It is one of the worst states a spirit can be in, to be fond of mocking. God hates this vice extremely, and has of old imposed strange punishments for it.<sup>4</sup> Nothing

<sup>1</sup> "Angelica masticata, nonnihilque deglutita, oris fœtentem halitum emendat" (Bauhir. Hist. plant. xxvii. 27).

<sup>2</sup> Ephes. v. 3, "Fornicatio autem, et omnis immunditia, aut avaritia, nec nominetur in vobis, sicut decet sanctos."

<sup>3</sup> 1 Cor. xv. 33, "Corrumpunt mores bonos colloquia mala."

<sup>4</sup> 4 Kings (2 Kings) ii. 23, 24, "Pueri parvi illudebant eo (Eliseo) dicentes: Ascende, calve, ascende, calve . . . egressique sunt duo ursi de saltu, et laceraverunt ex eis quadraginta duos pueros."

is so contrary to charity, and much more to devotion, as the scorn and contempt of a neighbour. Now derision and mockery never take place without this contempt. This is why it is so very great a sin, that the Doctors have reason for saying that mockery is the worst kind of offence that one can give to a neighbour by words; other offences are given with some regard to him who is offended, but this is given with scorn and contempt.<sup>1</sup>

As to the play of words, which we practice one with another, with a modest gaiety and enjoyment, it belongs to virtue, and is named Eutrapelia by the Greeks, which we may call good conversation.<sup>2</sup> And by it we take an honest and pleasant enjoyment on the idle occasions which human imperfections supply.<sup>3</sup> We must be careful not to pass from honest enjoyment to mockery. Now mockery provokes to laughter by scorn and contempt for our neighbour; but gaiety and jesting provoke to laughter by a mere liberty, confidence, and familiar freedom joined to the quaintness of some expression.

<sup>1</sup> “Aliquem illudere vel irridere est eum omnino parvipendere, et eum tam vilem æstimare ut de ejus malo non sit curandum, sed sit quasi pro ludo habendum; et sic derisio est peccatum mortale” (St Thom. Summ. 2<sup>a</sup>, 2<sup>æ</sup>, qu. 75, art. 2).

<sup>2</sup> “Ad eutrapeliam pertinet dicere aliquod leve convitium, non ad dehonorationem, vel ad contristationem ejus, in quem dicitur, sed magis causa delectationis et loci. Et hoc potest esse sine peccato, si debitæ circumstantiæ observentur” (St Thom. Summ. 2<sup>a</sup>, 2<sup>æ</sup>, qu. 72, art. 2 ad 1<sup>m</sup>).

<sup>3</sup> “L’Introduction n’a pas pourtant été exempt d’une rude censure de quelques-uns, qui ne m’ont pas seulement blâmé, mais m’ont âprement bafoué en public de ce que je dis à Philothée que le bal est une action de soi-même indifférente, et qu’en récréation on peut dire des quolibets: et moi, sachant la qualité de ces censeurs, je loue leur intention, que je pense avoir été bonne” (“Traité de l’amour de Dieu,” Preface).

St Louis,<sup>1</sup> when the religious wished to speak of sublime things after dinner, said, "It is not time to quote, but to refresh ourselves with some joke or jest. Let each one say what he will, modestly." This he said, showing indulgence to the nobility who were about him to receive favour from his Majesty.<sup>2</sup> But, Philothea, let us so pass our time in recreation that we may keep our holy eternity in devotion.<sup>3</sup>

## CHAPTER XXVIII

### *Of Rash Judgments.*

"JUDGE not, and ye shall not be judged," says the Saviour of our souls; "Condemn not, and ye shall not be condemned."<sup>4</sup> "No," says the holy Apostle, "judge not before the time, till the Lord come, who will reveal the secret things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts."<sup>5</sup> O

<sup>1</sup> He justifies his statement by the authority of St Louis, "docteur digne d'être suivi en l'art de bien conduire les courtisans à la vie dévote" (Traité, Preface).

<sup>2</sup> "Quando rex bonus animam relaxabat, quæstiones mihi proponebat" (Joinville).

<sup>3</sup> "Une autre fois on se riait devant lui, d'un homme. absent, qui avait la taille toute gâtée, et était bossu devant et derrière : il prit aussitôt sa défense, et allégua le même mot de l'Ecriture, que les œuvres de Dieu étaient parfaites. 'Comment parfaites,' releva quelqu'un, 'en une taille si imparfaite!' Le Bienheureux reprit de fort bonne grâce : 'Hé! pensez-vous qu'il n'y ait pas de parfaits bossus, aussi bien que des personnes de taille extrêmement droite?'" ("L'Esprit," part xii. § 11).

<sup>4</sup> St Luke vi. 37, "Nolite judicare, et non judicabimini : nolite condemnare, et non condemnabimini."

<sup>5</sup> 1 Cor. iv. 5, "Nolite ante tempus judicare, quoadusque veniat Dominus: qui et illuminabit abscondita tenebrarum, et manifestabit consilia cordium."

how displeasing are rash judgments to God! The judgment of the children of men are rash because they are not judges of one another, and in judging they usurp the office of our Lord. They are rash, because the chief malice of sin lies in the intention and counsel of the heart, which are the secret things of darkness within us. They are rash, because each one has enough to do to judge himself, without undertaking to judge his neighbour. For as our Lord forbids the one, the Apostle orders the other, saying, "If we judge ourselves, we shall not be judged."<sup>1</sup> But, O God! we do quite the contrary, for that which is forbidden us we do not cease to do, judging our neighbour on every possible occasion; and that which we are bidden to do, which is to judge ourselves, we never do at all.

According to the causes of rash judgments, we must seek a remedy for them. There are hearts which are sour, bitter, and sharp in nature, which make equally sour and bitter all that they receive, and "turn," as the Prophet says, "judgment into wormwood,"<sup>2</sup> never judging their neighbour but with sternness and sharpness. These have great need of falling into the hands of a spiritual physician, for this bitterness of heart being natural to them, it is difficult to conquer; and though it be not sin but only imperfection, it is dangerous, because it introduces and causes rash judgment and slander to reign in the soul. Some judge rashly not by sourness but by pride, thinking that the more they disparage a man's honour, the more they raise their own.<sup>3</sup> Arrogant and presumptuous spirits! They

<sup>1</sup> 1 Cor. xi. 31, "Quod si nosmetipsos dijudicemus non utique judicemur."

<sup>2</sup> Amos v. 7, "Qui convertitis absinthium judicium."

<sup>3</sup> "La bonne opinion que nous avons de nous-mêmes,

admire themselves, and rank themselves so high in their own estimation that they regard all the rest of the world as something small and base! "I am not like the rest of men,"<sup>1</sup> said the foolish Pharisee. Some have not this manifest pride, but only a certain little deference in regard to the evil of others, that they may relish and cause to relish more pleasantly the opposite good with which they think themselves endowed. And this deference is so secret and so imperceptible that if we have not good sight we cannot discover it, and those even who are troubled with it do not know it unless it is shown to them. Others, to flatter and excuse themselves in their own estimation, and to soothe the remorse of their conscience, are very ready to judge others who are giving way to the vice to which they themselves are addicted, or to some other equally serious, thinking that the multitude of criminals renders their own crime less worthy of blame. Many indulge in rash judgment merely for the pleasure they take in moralising and thinking over the manners and tempers of others, by way of exercising their wit. But if sometimes they meet with truth in their judgments, their boldness and appetite for following it up increases in them to such an extent that it is very difficult to turn them away from it. Others judge according to their passion, and always think well of what they love, and

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produit un autre désordre bien préjudiciable; c'est le jugement téméraire, qui fait que nous concevons et que nous donnons aux autres une basse idée de notre prochain. Comme ce vice nâit de notre orgueil, c'est aussi par notre orgueil qu'il s'entretient. . . . Car nous venons insensiblement à avoir pour nous d'autant plus d'estime que nous en avons moins pour les autres; étant faussement persuadez que nous sommes tout-à-fait exempts des fautes dont nous les jugeons coupables" ("Combat Spirituel," chap. xliii.).

<sup>1</sup> St Luke xviii. 11, "Non sum sicut ceteri hominum."

always ill of what they hate, except in one case, wonderful and yet true, in which the excess of love provokes them to judge evilly of what they love—a monstrous effect which comes of a love which is impure, imperfect, troubled, and sick. And this is jealousy, which, as every one knows, for a simple look, for the least smile, accuses persons of faithlessness and adultery. In fact, fear, ambition, and such-like weakness of the spirit, often help a great deal in the production of suspicion and rash judgment.

But what remedies are there? Those who drink the sap of the herb ophiusa of Ethiopia,<sup>1</sup> imagine that they see everywhere serpents and frightful things. Those who have swallowed pride, envy, ambition, hatred, see nothing but what is evil and worthy of blame. The former, that they may be healed, ought to take palm wine. And I say the same for the latter. Drink as much as you can of the sacred wine of charity; it will deliver you from those evil humours which make you form wrong judgments. Charity fears to meet with evil, so far is it from searching after it; and when it finds it, it turns away its face from it and takes no notice of it, but shuts its eyes before it sees it even at the first report it has of it, and believes in holy simplicity that it was not evil, but only the shadow or some phantom of evil. But if perforce it recognises that it is evil, it turns away from it immediately and tries to forget its form. Charity is the great remedy for all evils, but especially for this. All things appear yellow to those who have the liver affected and

<sup>1</sup> “Democritus tradit ophiusam in Elephantine Æthiopiæ, lividam, difficilemque aspectu quæ pota terrorem minasque serpentium observari, ita ut mortem sibi ex metu consciscant, ob id cogi sacrilegos illam bibere; adversari autem ei palmeum vinum” (Plin. Hist. Nat. xxiv. 102).

suffer from the yellow jaundice. It is said that to cure them of this illness they must be made to carry celandine<sup>1</sup> under the soles of their feet. Indeed, this sin of rash judgment is a spiritual jaundice, which makes everything appear evil in the eyes of those who are troubled with it; but those who wish to be cured of it ought to put the remedies not on the eyes, not on the understanding, but on the affections, which are the feet of the soul. If your affections are gentle, your judgment will be gentle; if they are charitable, your judgment will be the same. I give you three admirable examples:—Isaac had said that Rebecca was his sister. Abimelech saw that he sported with her—that is to say, that he fondled her tenderly—and he judged at once that she was his wife. An evil eye would have sooner judged that she was his mistress, or that if she was his sister, that he was an incestuous person. But Abimelech formed the most charitable opinion that he could form on such a fact.<sup>2</sup> We should always do the same, Philothea, judging in favour of our neighbour as much as is possible. But if an action can have a hundred aspects, we should look at it in that aspect which is most beautiful. Our Lady was with child; St. Joseph saw it plainly. But because in another aspect he saw her to be altogether holy, altogether pure, altogether angelic, he could never believe that she was with child against her duty, so that he resolved to let her alone, leaving the judgment to God: although there was a strong reason for leading him to form a bad opinion of this Virgin unless he had never wished to

<sup>1</sup> Celandine: *éclairer*. “The roote cureth the yellow jaundise, that commeth of the stopping of the gall, especially when there is no ague joyned” (Gerarde’s Herball., p. 912).

<sup>2</sup> Gen. xxvi. 9, “Perspicuum est quod uxor tua sit: cur mentitus es eam sororem tuam esse.”

form a judgment about it. But why? Because, says the Spirit of God, he was just;<sup>1</sup> the just man, when he can no longer excuse either the fact or the intention of him whom otherwise he knows to be a good man, does not wish to form a judgment on it, but puts it away from his mind and leaves the judgment to God.<sup>2</sup> But the Saviour on the Cross, not being able to excuse in everything the sin of those who crucified Him, at least lessened the malice of it, alleging their ignorance.<sup>3</sup> When we cannot excuse sin, let us make it at least worthy of compassion, assigning it to the most tolerable cause that we can, such as ignorance or infirmity.

But may we then never judge our neighbour? Indeed, never. It is God, indeed, Philothea, who judges criminals in public justice. It is true that He makes use of the voice of the magistrate to make it intelligible to our ears. They are His dragomans and interpreters, and ought only to preserve that which they have learnt from Him, as being His oracles. But if they do otherwise, following their own passions, then it is indeed they who judge and they who will consequently be judged. For it is forbidden to men, as men, to judge others.

To see or recognise a thing is not to judge of it; for judgment, at least according to the phrase of the Scripture, presupposes some small or great, some real or apparent difficulty which is to be decided. This is why it says that those who do not believe at all are

<sup>1</sup> St Matt. i. 19, "Joseph autem vir ejus, cum esset justus, et nollet eam traducere, voluit occulte dimittere eam."

<sup>2</sup> "Aussitôt qu'il nous représente quelque vice du prochain, rejettons cette pensée, et s'il continue à nous presser d'en former un jugement désavantageux, gardons-nous bien d'écouter ses suggestions malignes" ("Combat Spirituel," chap. xliii.).

<sup>3</sup> St Luke xxiii. 34, "Pater, dimitte illis: non enim sciunt quid faciunt."

already judged,<sup>1</sup> because there is no doubt at all about their damnation. It is not therefore wrong to have doubts about your neighbour, for it is not forbidden to doubt but to judge. But it is not, however, allowed either to doubt or to be suspicious except exactly and altogether as the reasons and arguments constrain us to doubt; otherwise our doubts and suspicions are rash. If some evil eye had seen Jacob when he kissed Rachel near the well,<sup>2</sup> or had seen Rebecca accept the bracelets and earrings of gold from Eleazar,<sup>3</sup> a man unknown in that country, he would without doubt have thought evilly of these two examples of chastity, but without reason or foundation; for when an action is of itself indifferent, it is a rash suspicion to draw from it an evil inference unless several circumstances give force to the argument. It is thus a rash judgment to make inferences from an act for the purpose of blaming a person. But I will speak of this soon with fresh clearness.

In fact, those who are very careful of their consciences are scarcely ever subjects for rash judgment. For as bees when they see fog or misty weather withdraw to their hives to work the honey, so the thoughts of good souls do not go forth on objects which are befogged, nor amongst the misty actions of their neighbours. But to avoid meeting them they gather up the good resolutions of their own amendment. It is the act of an idle soul to be interested in the examina-

<sup>1</sup> St John iii. 18, "Qui autem non credit, jam judicatus est."

<sup>2</sup> Gen. xxix. 11, "Et adaquato grege, osculatus est eam."

<sup>3</sup> Gen. xxiv. 22, "Postquam autem biberunt cameli, protulit vir in aures aureas, appendentes siclos duos, et armillas totidem pondo siclorum decem."

tion of the life of others. I except those who have charge of others in the family as well as in the State, for a good part of their conscience consists in noticing and watching over that of others. Let them then do their duty with love: beyond this, let them keep themselves to themselves as regards this matter.

## CHAPTER XXIX

*Of Slander.*

RASH judgment produces anxiety, contempt of our neighbour, pride and self-satisfaction, and a hundred other most pernicious results, amongst which slander holds the first rank as the real plague of our intercourse. O that I had one of the coals from the holy altar to touch the lips of men, that their iniquity might be taken away, and their sin cleansed, in imitation of the seraphim who purified the mouth of Isaiah ! <sup>1</sup> He who would take away slander from the world would take away from it a great part of the sins of iniquity.

Whosoever takes away from his neighbour his good fame, besides the sin which he commits, is obliged to make reparation, though differently according to the difference of the slander. For no one can enter heaven with the good of another,<sup>2</sup> and among all the outward things that are good, fame is the best. Slander is a kind of murder. For we have three lives, the spiritual, which lies in the grace of God ; the bodily, which lies in the soul ; and the civil, which consists in

<sup>1</sup> Isa. vi. 6, 7, "Et volavit ad me unus de Seraphim, et in manu ejus calculus, quem forcipe tulerat de altari. Et tetigit os meum, et dixit. Ecce, tetigit hoc labia tua, et auferetur iniquitas tua, et peccatum tuum mundabitur."

<sup>2</sup> 1 Cor. vi. 10, "Neque fures, neque maledici, neque rapaces, regnum Dei possidebunt."

our fame. Sin takes away the first from us, death takes away from us the second, and slander takes away from us the third. But the slanderer, by a single stroke of the tongue, usually commits three murders. He kills his own soul, and with a spiritual kind of homicide that of the person who listens to him, and takes away the civil life from the person whom he slanders. For as St Bernard said, both he who slanders and he who listens to the slanderer have both the devil upon them.<sup>1</sup> But one has him in his tongue, and the other in his ear. David, speaking of the slanderers, says, "They have sharpened their tongues like a serpent."<sup>2</sup> Now the serpent has its tongue forked, and with two points, as Aristotle says,<sup>3</sup> and such is that of the slanderer, who with a single blow stings and poisons the ear of the listener and the reputation of him of whom he speaks.

I adjure you, therefore, dearest Philothea, never to slander any one either directly or indirectly. Take care not to impute false crimes and sins to your neighbour, nor to reveal those that are secret, nor to magnify those which are manifest, nor to interpret as evil a good work, nor to deny the good which you know to exist in any one, nor to hide it maliciously, nor lessen it by your words. For in all these ways you will be grievously offending God, but especially when you

<sup>1</sup> "Calix dæmoniorum detractio est." . . . "Porro detrahere aut detrahentem audire, quid horum damnabilius sit non facile dixerim" (St Bern. Ep. ii. Fulconi, § 10; De consid. ii. 13).

<sup>2</sup> Ps. cxxxix. 4, "Acuerunt linguas suas sicut serpentis: venenum aspidum sub labiis eorum" (A.V., Ps. cxi.).

<sup>3</sup> "Peculiare, præter cæterorum linguas, serpentibus et lacertis est, ut summa eorum lingua bifida sit, sed præcipue serpentum, quippe quæ tenuissimis quibusdam quasi capillamentis discreta vibretur" (Arist. Hist. animal, i. 11).

accuse any one falsely and deny the truth to the prejudice of your neighbour. For it is a double sin to lie and to hurt your neighbour at one and the same time.<sup>1</sup>

Those who, for purposes of slander, make profession of honour, or who make little pleasantries or jests indifferently, are the most cunning and venomous slanderers of all. "I assure you," they say, "that I love him, and that on the whole he is a gentleman; but yet I must speak the truth, he has done wrong in being guilty of such an act of faithlessness;" "She is a very virtuous girl, but she was taken by surprise," and such-like little expressions. Do you not see the artifice? He who wishes to shoot with a bow, draws the arrow to himself as much as he can, but it is only to shoot it with the greater force. It seems that these men draw back their slander to themselves, but it is only to discharge it more strongly that they may penetrate further into the hearts of their hearers. Slander spoken by way of jest is the most cruel of all. For as the hemlock is not of itself a very active poison, but sufficiently slow to make it easy to apply a remedy, yet when taken with wine is irremediable;<sup>2</sup> so slander, which of itself might pass in

<sup>1</sup> "La langue de l'homme a grand besoin d'être retenue, parcequ'on se plaît naturellement à parler des choses qui flâtent les sens. L'intempérance de la langue vient d'ordinaire d'un certain orgueil, qui fait que nous nous croyons beaucoup plus intelligens que nous ne sommes. . . . Ne parlez que le moins que vous pourrez du prochain et des choses qui le regardent, si ce n'est que l'occasion se presente d'en dire du bien" ("Combat Spirtuel." chap. xxiv.).

<sup>2</sup> "Quos enecat cicuta, incipiunt algere ab extremitatibus corporis. Remedio est, prius quam perveniatur ad vitalia, vini natura excalfactoria. Sed in vino pota, irremediabilis existimatur" (Plin. Hist. Nat. xxiv. 102).

lightly at one ear and out of the other, as we say, stops firmly in the brain of the hearer when it is presented in some subtle and jesting word. "They have," says David, "the venom of the asp in their lips."<sup>1</sup> The asp stings almost imperceptibly, and its venom at first produces a pleasant irritation by means of which the heart and the stomach dilate and receive the poison, against which afterwards there is no remedy at all.

Do not say, "This man is a drunkard," though you may have seen him drunk, nor "He is an adulterer," though you have seen him in this sin, nor "He is incestuous," for having found him in this misfortune. For a single act does not give a name to a thing. The sun stayed once to favour the wishes of Joshua,<sup>2</sup> and was hidden another time to favour the Saviour.<sup>3</sup> No one, however, will say that it is motionless or obscure. Noah was drunk at one time,<sup>4</sup> Lot at another, and the latter also committed grievous incest.<sup>5</sup> They were not, however, drunkards, either the one or the other, neither was the latter an incestuous person, nor St Peter bloodthirsty because he once shed blood,<sup>6</sup> nor a blasphemer because he once spoke blasphemy.<sup>7</sup> To receive the name of a vice or of a virtue, we must have made some progress and familiarity in it. It is there-

<sup>1</sup> Cf. note 2 p. 296.

<sup>2</sup> Josh. x. 13, "Stetit itaque Sol in medio cæli."

<sup>3</sup> St Luke xxiii. 45, "Et obscuratus est sol."

<sup>4</sup> Gen. ix. 21, "Bibensque vinum inebriatus est, et nudatus in tabernaculo suo."

<sup>5</sup> Gen. xix. 33, 36, "Dederunt ita patri suo bibere vinum nocte illa." "Conceperunt ergo duæ filiæ Lot de patre suo."

<sup>6</sup> St John xviii. 10, "Simon ergo Petrus habens gladium eduxit eum : et percussit pontificis servum."

<sup>7</sup> St Mark xiv. 71, "Ille autem cœpit anathematizare et jurare : Quia nescio hominem istum, quem dicitis."

fore a calumny to say that a man is passionate or a thief because we have seen him give way to anger or to stealing once. Though a man has been vicious for a long while, we run the risk of lying when we call him vicious. Simon the Leper called Magdalen a sinner,<sup>1</sup> because she had been so not long since; yet he was in error, for she was no longer so, but a most holy penitent. So our Lord took her case under His protection.

The foolish Pharisee held the Publican to be a great sinner, or perhaps even to be unjust, an adulterer, a ravisher, but he made a great mistake, for at that very time he was justified.<sup>2</sup> Alas! since the goodness of God is so great that a single moment is sufficient to obtain and receive grace, what assurance can we have that a man who was yesterday a sinner may be so to-day? The day before ought not to pass judgment on the present, nor the present day to judge the day before. It is the last day only which will judge all.

We can then never say that a man is wicked without danger of lying. What we may say in case we must speak is that he committed such an act which was evil, that he lived evilly at such a time, that he does wrong now. But we must not draw any inferences from yesterday as regards to-day, nor from to-day as regards yesterday, still less as regards to-morrow.

Although we ought to be extremely careful never to slander our neighbour, yet we ought to be on our guard against an excess into which some fall, when, to avoid slander they praise and speak well of vice.

<sup>1</sup> St Luke vii. 39, "Peccatrix est."

<sup>2</sup> St Luke xviii. 11, 14, "Deus, gratias ago tibi quia non sum sicut ceteri hominum raptores, injusti, adulteri: velut etiam hic publicanus." "Descendit hic (publicanus) justificatus in domum suam."

If you meet with a person who is really slanderous, do not say in excuse that he is free and frank, or a person who is openly vain, that he is generous and handsome ; do not call dangerous familiarity simplicity or frankness ; do not gloss over disobedience with the name of zeal, or arrogance with the name of freedom, or lewdness with the name of friendship. No, dear Philothea, you must not, when you are thinking to avoid the vice of slander, favour, flatter, or cherish the others, but you must roundly and frankly speak evil of evil and blame the things which are worthy of blame. By doing this, we glorify God, provided it be with the following conditions.

To blame the vices of another in a praiseworthy manner it is necessary that the profit either of the person of whom we speak or of those to whom we speak requires it. Some story is told in the presence of girls of the indiscreet familiarities of such men or such women, who are manifestly dangerous ; or of the depravity of such and such a person in language or in look who is manifestly dissolute ; if I do not freely blame this evil but rather excuse it, then tender souls who are listeners will take occasion to become remiss in something of the same kind. Their profit then requires that I should blame quite frankly these things on the spot, unless I can reserve this good office more advantageously and with less reference to those of whom I am speaking for another occasion.

Beyond this, it is also requisite that I should regard it as my duty to speak on this subject when I hold a high position in society, and when, if I do not speak, it will appear as if I approved of the vice. But if I am in a lower position, I ought not to undertake to pass censure. But above all, I ought to be strictly just in my words, so as not to say a word too much.

For example, if I blame the familiarity of this young man or young woman, because she is too indiscreet and dangerous, O God, Philothea, I ought to hold the balance very justly so as not to exaggerate the thing, not even by a single hair's-breadth. If there was only a slight appearance, I will only say that. If there was only a slight imprudence, I will say nothing more. If there was neither imprudence nor any real appearance of evil, but only that some malicious spirit could draw from it a pretext of slander, either I will say nothing at all about it, or I will say that only. My tongue, while I am speaking of my neighbour, is in my mouth like a lancet in the hand of a surgeon who wishes to cut between the nerves and the sinews. The blow that I give should be so just that I should say neither more nor less than that which is the truth. And best of all, we should above all take care when we are blaming the vice to spare as much as possible the person who gives way to it.<sup>1</sup>

It is true that of infamous, public, and open sinners we may speak freely, provided it be with the spirit of charity and forbearance and not with arrogance and presumption, so to give ourselves pleasure in the wickedness of others, for to do this is the act of a heart which is vile and abject. I altogether except all the declared enemies of God and His Church. For these we must denounce as much as we can, such as the sects of heretics and schismatics, and their leaders. It is charity to cry wolf when he is indeed among the sheep, indeed wherever he is.

<sup>1</sup> "Upbraid no man's weakness to him to discomfort him; neither report it to disparage him; neither delight to remember it to lessen him, or to set thyself above him. Be sure never to praise thyself, or to dispraise any man else, unless God's glory, or some holy end doe hallow it" (Jeremy Taylor, "Holy Living," chap. ii. § 4).

Every one exercises the freedom of judging and censuring princes, and of slandering whole nations according to the different affection we have in regard to them. Philothea, do not commit this fault, for besides the offence to God, it may stir up for you quarrels of all kinds.

If you hear any slander, make the charge doubtful, if you can do it justly; if you cannot, excuse the intention of the accused. But if that is not possible, show your compassion for him, turn the conversation, remembering yourself and bringing to the remembrance of the company that those who do not fall into evil owe it to the grace of God. Recall the slanderer to himself in some gentle way, say something else which is good of the person accused, if you know it.<sup>1</sup>

### CHAPTER XXX

#### *Some Further Counsels touching our Language.*

LET our language be gentle, frank, sincere, straight, simple, and faithful. Beware of duplicity, artifices, and deceits. Though it be not good always to say all kinds of truths, yet it is never lawful to violate the truth. Accustom yourself never to lie willingly, either by way of excuse or otherwise, remembering that God is the God of truth. If you lie inadvertently, and are able to correct it at once by some explanation or reparation, correct it. A genuine excuse has much more grace and power to exculpate than the lie.

<sup>1</sup> "Notre Bien-heureux avait de coutume de dire que qui ôterait la médisance du monde en ôterait une grande partie des péchés et de l'iniquité" ("L'Esprit," part xii. § 14).

Although sometimes we can disguise and cover the truth, discreetly and prudently, by some artifice of language, yet we ought not to practise this, except in a matter of importance when the glory and service of God clearly require it. Beyond this, artifices are dangerous. For as the sacred Scripture says, the Holy Spirit does not dwell at all in a false and double spirit.<sup>1</sup> There is no nobleness so good and desirable as simplicity. Worldly prudence and carnal artifices belong to the children of this world; but the children of God walk without evasion, and keep their heart without guile. "He who walks simply, says the wise man, walks confidently."<sup>2</sup> Lying, deceit, and dissimulation always show a weak and vile spirit.

St Augustine had said in the fourth book of his Confessions, that his soul and that of his friend were only one soul, and that he hated his life after the death of his friend, because he did not wish to live by halves; and that also for this reason he was afraid to die at random, lest his friend should die altogether. Those words seem to him afterwards too artificial and affected, so that he revokes them in the "Book of his Retractations," and calls them folly.<sup>3</sup> You see, dear Philothea, how this holy and beautiful soul is touched by the sense of the affectation of his words. Indeed, faithfulness, straightforwardness, and sincerity of language are a great ornament of the Christian life: "I have said, I will take heed to my ways, that I sin not

<sup>1</sup> Wisd. i. 5, "Spiritus enim sanctus disciplinæ effugiet fictum."

<sup>2</sup> Prov. x. 9, "Qui ambulat simpliciter, ambulat confidenter."

<sup>3</sup> "Quæ mihi quasi declamatio levis quam gravis confessio videtur, quamvis utcumque temperata sit hæc ineptia in eo quod additum est 'forte'" (St Aug. Retract. ii. 6, t. i. 44).

with my tongue.”<sup>1</sup> “Oh Lord, set a watch upon my mouth, and a door which shall close my lips,”<sup>2</sup> said David.

It is a counsel of the King St Louis not to dissent from any one, unless by assenting he should commit sin or do great harm, and this he did to avoid all contests and disputes.<sup>3</sup> And when it is of importance to contradict any one, and to express our opinion against that of another, we must use the greatest gentleness and dexterity, with no wish to do violence to the spirit of another; for we gain nothing when we deal roughly. To speak little, which is so much recommended by the wise men of old,<sup>4</sup> does not mean that we should say a few words, but that we should not say many useless ones. For in the matter of speaking, we do not look at the quantity but at the quality, and it seems to me that we ought to avoid the two extremes. For to be too reserved and severe, refusing to take part in the familiar terms which we used in conversation, seems to have either a lack of confidence or some sort of disdain in it. To be always babbling and chattering,

<sup>1</sup> Ps. xxxviii. 2, “Dixi: Custodiam vias meas: ut non delinquam in lingua mea” (A.V., Ps. xxxix.).

<sup>2</sup> Ps. cxl. 3, “Pone Domine custodiam ori meo: et ostium circumstantiæ labiis meis” (A.V., Ps. cxli.).

<sup>3</sup> “Et pariter mihi dixit, ut nunquam contradicerem, aut negarem quidquam eorum, quæ coram me diceret, nisi id patiundo, pudorem, damnum, aut peccatum incurrerem” (Joinville, “Vita S. Lud.,” part i. chap. i.).

<sup>4</sup> “Est et fideli tuta silentio  
Merces: vetabo, qui Cereris sacrum  
Vulgarit arcana, sub îdem  
Sit trabibus, fragilemve mecum  
Solvat phaselon. Sæpe Diespiter  
Neglectus incesto addidit integrum:  
Raro antecedentem scelestum  
Deseruit pede Poena claudo.”

—Hor. Carm. iii. 2.

without giving either an opening or opportunity to others to say what they wish, savours of flightiness and levity.<sup>1</sup>

St Louis did not consider it well when in company that any one should speak secretly or confidentially, and especially at table, lest it should raise the suspicion that evil was being spoken of others. "He who is at table in good company," he said, "and who has some joke or pleasantry to say, should say it that all may hear." If it is a matter of importance, it is well to be silent about it, without speaking.

## CHAPTER XXXI

*Of Pastimes and Recreations ; and first, of those which are Lawful and Praiseworthy.*

IT is necessary sometimes to relax our spirit, and even our body, with recreation of some kind. St John the Evangelist, as Cassian says, was one day found by a hunter holding a partridge on his wrist, which he was fondling for recreation. The hunter asked him why a man in his position should pass his time in so base and unworthy a manner, and St John said to him: "Why do you not always carry your bow stretched?" "For fear," replied the hunter, "lest, being always bent, it might lose the power of stretching when there is need of

<sup>1</sup> "Le silence est d'un grand secours dans le Combat Spirituel ; et ceux qui le gardent, peuvent de promettre qu'ils remporteront la victoire" ("Combat Spirituel, chap. xxiv.).

it." "Do not be astonished," replied the Apostle, "if I lay aside a little the rigour and attention of my mind to take a little recreation, that I may give myself afterwards more rigorously to contemplation."<sup>1</sup> It is without doubt a fault to be so rigorous, unmannerly, and rude as to have no wish to take for ourselves, or to permit to others, any kind of recreation.

To take the air, to go for a walk, to amuse ourselves in a pleasant and delightful way, to play the lute or other instrument, to sing to the accompaniment of music, to go hunting, are recreations so honest, that to use them well there is only need of common prudence, which gives to all things their rank, season, place, and measure.<sup>2</sup>

The games in which the gain serves as a prize and reward for the skill and industry of body and mind, such as the game of fives,<sup>3</sup> ball,<sup>4</sup> pall-mall,<sup>5</sup> tilting

<sup>1</sup> "Cui beatus Joannes : Quid est quod manus tua gestat ? At ille : Arcus, inquit. Et cur, ait, non eum tensum ubique semper circumfers ?" ("Cass. Coll.," xxiv. 21).

<sup>2</sup> "Let not your recreations be lavish spenders of your time, but choose such which are healthful, short, transient, recreative, and apt to refresh you" (Jeremy Taylor, "Holy Living," chap. i. § 1).

<sup>3</sup> "La paume." The game of fives was played in France and England as early as the fourteenth century.

<sup>4</sup> "Ballon." It does not appear what game of ball is referred to.

<sup>5</sup> "Palemaille." "To St James's Park, where I saw the Duke of York playing at Pelemele, the first time that I ever saw the sport" ("Pepys' Diary," April 2, 1661). The Mall had been laid out by Charles II. for this game. The older walk was on the site of Pall Mall. The game is supposed to have been introduced from France in the opening years of the seventeenth century. The game consisted in driving a ball along a straight alley with a mallet, and then through a ring attached to a pole.

at the ring,<sup>1</sup> chess,<sup>2</sup> backgammon,<sup>3</sup> are recreations in themselves good and lawful. We should only guard ourselves against excess, whether as to the time we give to them, or to the prize we put on them, for if we employ too much time in them it is no longer recreation, but occupation; we do not ease either the mind or the body, but on the contrary make them dull and heavy. When we have played five or six hours at chess, we are quite tired out and weary in mind. To play long at fives is not to refresh the body, but to make it heavy. Now, if the prize, that is to say, the stake for which we play, is too great, the affections of the players grow disorderly. And besides this, it is unjust to set great prizes for skill and industry of so little importance and so profitless as is skill in play. But especially take care, Philothea, not to attach your affections to all this, for

<sup>1</sup> "Les courses à la bague." In the sixteenth century riding or tilting at the ring was beginning to supersede the joust. Cp. Illustrations 1809, 1813, in Knight's "Old England."

<sup>2</sup> "Les eschets." The work of Ruy Lopez, a Spanish ecclesiastic, was published in Alcala in 1561. Its republication at Venice in 1584 brought the game prominently into notice in Italy, where St Francis may have learnt it when at Padua in 1587. Ruy Lopez was himself defeated by Paolo Boi, a native of Syracuse, who was patronised at the French Court by Catherine de Medici. The early Italian School of Chess extended from 1550 to 1620, and synchronises therefore very closely with the life of St Francis. Greco was a well-known member of this school.

<sup>3</sup> "Les tables." The old name in France and England for tric-trac or backgammon. It is referred to twice by Jeremy Taylor: "We are in the world like men playing at Tables, the chance is not in our power, but to play it, is" ("Holy Living," chap. ii. § 6). "Patroclus killed his friend, the son of Amphidamus, in his rage and sudden fury, rising upon a crosse game at tables" ("Holy Living," chap. iv. § 8).

however honest a recreation may be, it is a fault to set your heart and affection on it. I do not say that you are not to take pleasure in playing when you do play, for otherwise you would not be refreshing yourself; but I say you are not to set your affection on it, to desire it, to be interested in it, and to be too eager about it.<sup>1</sup>

## CHAPTER XXXII

### *Of Forbidden Games.*

GAMES of dice,<sup>2</sup> of cards, and such like, in which the advantage depends chiefly on chance, are not only dangerous recreations, like dances, but are simply and naturally evil and worthy of blame. This is why they are forbidden by the laws, both civil and ecclesiastical.<sup>3</sup> But what great harm is there in it? you will say to me. The advantage in these games

<sup>1</sup> Roger Ascham, who died in 1568, and belonged to an earlier generation, gives some advice as to the sports "which be not only comely and decent, but also very necessary for a courtly gentleman." He is "to ride comely, to run fair at the tilt or ring, to play at all weapons, to shoot fair in bow, or surely in gun; to vault lustily, to run, to leap, to wrestle, to swim, to dance comely, to sing, and play of instruments cunningly; to hawk, to hunt, to play at tennis, and all pastimes generally which be joined with labour, and in open place, and in the day light, containing either some fit exercise for war, or some pleasant pastime for peace" ("Old England," Ch. Knight, vol. ii. p. 127).

<sup>2</sup> Games of dice, such as hazard, in which the dice were cast.

<sup>3</sup> By an Act of 33 Henry VIII., not only dice and cards, but tables, tennis, bowls, and other games was prohibited. By another of 13 George II., all games of dice, except backgammon and games played on a backgammon board, were forbidden. The Code of Justinian forbade the clergy of every rank from

is not gained according to reason, but according to chance; and this often falls to those who by skill and industry do not at all deserve it. Reason is thus offended in it. But we have agreed to this, you will say. That is all very well to show that he who has the advantage does no wrong to the others, but it does not follow that the agreement is not unreasonable and the game also, for the advantage which ought to be the prize of industry is made the prize of chance, which deserves no prize, since it depends in no way on ourselves.

Besides this, these games bear the name of recreation, and are played for this purpose, and yet they are not in any way so, but violent occupation. For is it not an occupation to keep the mind strained and stretched by continual attention, and troubled with perpetual anxiety and eagerness? Is there any attention more sad, more gloomy and melancholy, than that of players? This is why we must not talk over the game, we must not laugh, we must not cough; if we do, we make them angry.

Indeed, there is no pleasure at all in the play, except in winning, and is not this pleasure wrong, since it cannot be enjoyed without the loss and displeasure of our companions? For these three reasons, these games are forbidden. The great King, St Louis, knowing that the Count of Anjou, his brother, and Maître Gautier de Nemours were playing, got up, ill as he was, and went tottering into their room, and then

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playing at games of chance (*ad tabulas ludere*). The Council of Eliberis (305) had a canon against dicing: "*Si quis fidelis alea, id est tabula luserit, placuit eum abstinere.*" Tables, however, seem to have been distinguished from dicing by St Francis and Jeremy Taylor, as well as in the later English Acts.

took the tables, the dice, and a part of the money, and threw them through the window into the sea, being in a great rage with them.<sup>1</sup> The holy and chaste maiden Sara, speaking to God of her innocence: "Thou knowest," she said, "O Lord, that I have never been in the company of players."<sup>2</sup>

## CHAPTER XXXIII

*Of Balls and Pastimes which are Lawful but Dangerous.*

DANCES and balls are things indifferent in their nature,<sup>3</sup> but according to the ordinary manner in which these exercises are practised they are prone and inclined to the side of evil, and consequently full of danger and of peril. They are held at night, and amid the darkness and obscurity it is easy for many dark and vicious accidents to befall a person who of himself is very susceptible of evil. They are associated with long nights, after which we lose the morning of the following day and consequently the means of serving God in it. In a word, it is always folly to change the

<sup>1</sup> "Die quodam sciscitabatur, quid ageret frater suus comes Andegavensis: relatum est regi, eum tesseras mittere super alveum cum domino Galtero de Nemours. Ubi hoc audiit, surrexit, adivitque omnino vacillans ex magna morbi debilitate, qua erat: cumque ad eos pervenisset, sumpsit tesserus alveumque, atque iniecit in pelagus, acerrimeque fratrem suum reprehendit" (Joinville, chap. xvii.).

<sup>2</sup> Tob. iii. 16, 17, "Tu scis, Domine, quia nunquam cum ludentibus miscui."

<sup>3</sup> In the Preface to the treatise on the Love of God he refers to the criticism which this statement had met with. He points out that it rests on the teaching of theologians of great learning and sanctity, that he is writing for those who live in the world and at court, and that he is careful to point out the dangers of dancing. Cf. chap. xxvii. note 11.

day for the night, the light for the darkness, good works for wantonness. Every one at a ball puts on vanity for the purpose of excelling another, and vanity is in itself so great a disposition to evil affections and love at once dangerous and worthy of blame, that all this is easily produced at a dance.

I speak to you of dances, Philothea, as physicians speak of toadstools and mushrooms.<sup>1</sup> The best are of no value, they say, and I say that the best balls are scarcely good. If, however, you must eat mushrooms, take care that they are well prepared. If on any occasion, on which you cannot well excuse yourself, you must go to a ball, take care that your dancing is well ordered. But how should it be carried out? With modesty, with dignity, and with good intention. Eat of them little and very seldom (say the physicians, speaking of mushrooms), for however well prepared they are, quantity makes them poisonous. Dance little and not often, Philothea, for doing otherwise, you put yourself in danger of being too fond of it.

Mushrooms, according to Pliny,<sup>2</sup> being spongy and porous, as indeed they are, easily attract all contagion which is about them, so that being near serpents they receive venom from them. Balls, dances, and evening assemblies of a like kind usually attract the vices and sins which reign in a place, the quarrels, the envy, the mockery, the false love. And as these exercises open the pores of the body of those who practise them, so

<sup>1</sup> "Inter ea quæ temere manduntur, et boletos merito posuerim; optimi quidam hos cibi, sed immerso exemplo in crimen redactos, veneno Tiberio Claudio principi per hanc occasionem a conjuge Agrippina dato" (Plin. Hist. Nat. xxii. 46).

<sup>2</sup> "Ducunt ipsi alia vitia; et quidem si serpentis caverna juxta fuerit, si patescentem primo adhalaverit, capaci venenorum cognatione ad virus accipiendum" (Plin., *ibid.*).

do they open also the pores of the heart. By means of this, if some serpent comes upon it and whispers in the ear some lewd word, some folly, some nonsense, or if some basilisk comes and darts immodest looks or eyes of love, the heart is easily seized and poisoned.

O Philothea, these impertinent recreations are usually dangerous. They take away the spirit from devotion, they weaken our strength, they chill charity, and awaken in the soul all kinds of evil affections. This is why we must use them with great prudence.

But above all, it is said that after eating mushrooms we ought to drink costly wine. And I say that after dances we ought to make use of holy and good considerations to prevent the dangerous impressions which the vain pleasures we have received may have given to our spirit. But what considerations!

1. At the very time you were at the ball, many souls were burning in hell fire for sins committed at a dance, or by reason of a dance.

2. Many religious and devout people were at the same hour before God, singing His praises and contemplating His beauty. O how far more happily their time has been spent than yours!

3. Whilst you have been dancing, many souls have died in great agony, many thousands of men and women have suffered great pain in their beds, in hospitals, in streets—gout, gravel, burning fever. Alas! They have had no repose. Will you not have some compassion for them? And do you never think that one day you will be groaning like them whilst others are dancing as you have been!

4. Our Lord, our Lady, the Angels, and the Saints have seen you at the ball. Ah! how much pity they have had for you, seeing your heart interested in such great silliness and such attention to these trifles,

5. Alas ! whilst you have been there, the time has been passing, death has been approaching. See how he mocks at you, and how he calls you to his dance,<sup>1</sup> in which the groans of your sins will serve as his fiddle, and where you will make but one journey from life to death. This dance is the real pastime of mortals, since in it we pass in a moment from time to eternity, either of good or of evil. I put forward these little considerations for you, but God will suggest others to the same effect, if you have His fear.

#### CHAPTER XXXIV

##### *When we may Play or Dance.*

TO play and dance lawfully, we must do it for the sake of recreation and not of affection, for a short time, and not until we are weary and tired. And we must do it but seldom, for he who does it as a rule will turn the recreation into an occupation. But on what occasions may we dance and play ? The right occasions for such dancing and games as are indifferent in their character are more frequent. Those for games which are forbidden are rarer, since such games are much more worthy of blame and more dangerous. But, in one word, dance and play, according to the conditions I have pointed out to you, when for the sake of pleasing and humouring the good company you may be in, prudence and discretion counsel you to do it. For compliance, as the offshoot of charity, makes indifferent things good and dangerous

<sup>1</sup> The most familiar representation of this "Dance of Death" is that on the old Mühlenbrücke at Lucerne. The subject was a favourite one in the Middle Ages.

things permissible. It takes away even malice from those things which are in some sort evil. This is why games of chance, which would otherwise be worthy of blame, are not so at times, if reasonable compliance lead us to use them. I have been comforted by reading in the life of St Carlo Borromeo that he complied with the Swiss in certain matters in which otherwise he was very strict;<sup>1</sup> and also that the Blessed Ignatius Loyola, when invited to play, accepted the invitation.<sup>2</sup> As to St Elizabeth of Hungary, she played and danced at times, when she was in assemblies of recreation, without interference with her devotion,<sup>3</sup> for this was so well rooted in her soul that as the rocks around the Lake of Rieti<sup>4</sup> grow when they are beaten by the

<sup>1</sup> "Alli Signori Suizzeri, e Grigioni mostrava affettione particolare, e molto straordinaria, per essere parte di loro di paesi infetti d'heresia . . . però si mostrava affabilissimo, mangiando con essi loro, etiandio de i cibi, de' quali solea astenersi per sua mortificatione, e bevendo ancora tall'-hora del vino, per accomodarsi alla loro natura, e modo di vivere, a fin di guadagnarli a Dio; si come per questa via n' aiuto molti, e delli principali di quelle nationi; onde potera dire con l' Apostolo: Factus sum omnia omnibus, ut omnes lucrifacerem" (Giussano, "Vita de S. Carlo," Lib. viii. cap. xxvi.).

<sup>2</sup> "A Paris un gentil-homme luy ayant un jour demandé par jeu s'il vouloit point jouer au guichet, qui est poulser ou couler sur une longue table un boulet d'yvoive par une petite porte: Ouy dea (fit le P. Ignace) je joueray voirement: sous quel condition ou assurance (replicqua l'autre) vous qui n'avez pas argent? par tel si, respond la P. Ignace, que je vous serviray quelques jours: mais ce sera à vostre discretion si vous gaignez, à la mienne au contraire si je gaigne" (Maffè, "Vie du B. P. Ignace," Liv. iii. chap. v.).

<sup>3</sup> "In compliance with the landgrave, she, on certain public occasions, conformed in some degree to the fashions of the court" (Alban Butler, Nov. 19).

<sup>4</sup> "In exitu paludis Reatinæ saxa crescunt" (Plin. Hist. Nat. ii. 106).

waves, so her devotion grew amid the pomps and vanities to which her position exposed it. There are great fires which are kindled in the mind, but there are little ones which are extinguished if we do not protect them.

## CHAPTER XXXV

*That we must be Faithful both on Great and on Small Occasions.*

THE sacred Bridegroom in the Song of Songs says that his Bride has ravished his heart by one of her eyes and one of her hairs.<sup>1</sup> Now, among all the outward parts of the human body there is nothing more noble, whether for skill or for activity, than the eye; nor anything more valueless than the hair. This is why the divine Bridegroom wishes us to understand that he does not only accept the great works of devout persons but also the least and most worthless; and that if we would minister to His taste, we must take great care to serve Him in things which are great and high as well as in those which are small and abject, since we can easily rob His heart of love both by one and the other.

Be ready, therefore, Philothea, to suffer many great afflictions, and even martyrdom for our Lord. Resolve to give Him all that is most precious to you, if it please Him to take it, father, mother, brother, husband, wife, children, your eyes even, and your life; for to all this you ought to prepare your heart. But so long as the Divine Providence does not send you such evident and great afflictions, and does not

<sup>1</sup> Cant. iv. 9, "Vulnerasti cor meum in uno oculorum tuorum, et in uno crine colli tui,"

require of you your eyes, give Him at least your hair. I mean, bear quite gently the minute injuries, the little inconveniencies, the losses of little importance which come daily to you, for by means of these little opportunities used with love and delight, you will wholly win His heart, and will make It wholly yours. These little acts of daily charity, this headache, this toothache, this cold, this whim of husband or of wife, this breaking of a glass, this contempt, or this pouting, this loss of gloves, of a ring, of a handkerchief, this little trouble we sometimes make in going to bed early, and getting up early to pray, to communicate, this little bashfulness we have in doing certain acts of devotion in public; in short, all these little troubles being taken and embraced with love give the utmost satisfaction to the Divine goodness, which for only a glass of water has promised the sea of all happiness to those who are faithful to Him.<sup>1</sup> And because these opportunities occur at any moment, to use them well is a great means of gathering much spiritual treasure.

When I have seen in the life of St Catherine of Sienna so much rapture and elevation of spirit, so many words of wisdom, and even of prediction spoken by her, I have had no doubt that with this eye of contemplation she has ravished the heart of her heavenly Bridegroom.<sup>2</sup> But I have been equally comforted when I have seen

<sup>1</sup> St Matt. x. 42, "Et quicumque potum dederit uni ex minimis istis calicem aquæ frigidæ tantum in nomine discipuli, amen dico vobis, non perdet mercedem suam."

<sup>2</sup> She records one of these visions in a letter to Fr. Bartolommeo, a Dominican, of Florence: "Così mi ricordo che, poco è, egli diceva: Io son colui, che sostengo e mantengo tutto il mondo. Io son quello mezzo che uni la natura divina con la natura umana: io son quella mano forte, che tengo il gonfalone della croce" (S. Cat. da Siena, Lettera, cxxix.).

her in her father's kitchen humbly turning the spit, making up the fire, preparing the meat, kneading the bread, and doing all the lowest duties of the house with a courage full of love and devotion to her God.<sup>1</sup> And do not value the short and poor meditation which she used to make amid the mean and abject offices at a less amount than the ecstasy and the raptures she had so often, and which perhaps were only given her as a reward for this humility and abjection. Now her meditation was of this kind. She imagined that while she was preparing for her father, she was preparing for our Lord like St Martha; that her mother held the place of our Lady, and her brothers the place of the Apostles, thus arousing herself in this way to serve in spirit all the heavenly Court, and employing herself in these menial duties with so great a sweetness because she knew that this was the will of God. I have spoken of this example, Philothea, that you may know how important it is to direct all our actions, however lowly they may be, to the service of His divine Majesty.

To this end, I advise you, as much as I can, to imitate that strong woman whom the great Solomon has praised so highly, who, as he says, put her hand to things which were strong, generous, and exalted, and yet did not neglect to spin and turn the spindle. "She put her hand to a strong matter, and her fingers have taken the spindle."<sup>2</sup> Put your hand to a strong matter, exercising yourself in prayer and meditation, in the use of the Sacraments, in showing the love of

<sup>1</sup> Cf. part. ii. chap. xii. note, "Quindi in casa impropria, e imposti a lei i servigi più abietti, e tolta la sua cameretta, rifugio di orazione" (S. Cat. da Siena, Tom-maseo, *Lo Spirito*, vol. i. p. vi.).

<sup>2</sup> Prov. xxxi. 19, "Manum suam misit ad fortia et digiti ejus apprehenderunt fusum."

God to souls, in spreading good inspirations within the heart, and indeed in doing great and important works according to your calling. But do not forget your spindle and your distaff; that is to say, practise the small and humble virtues, which grow like flowers at the foot of the Cross, ministering to the poor, visiting the sick, looking after the family and the duties which depend upon it, and the diligence in useful things which will never leave you idle. And amongst all these things, throw in similar considerations to those which I have just spoken of concerning St Catherine.

Great opportunities of serving God occur rarely, but little ones are common. "Now he who is faithful in that which is little," says our Saviour Himself, "will be appointed over that which is much."<sup>1</sup> Do therefore all things in the name of God, and all things will be done well. Whether you eat, whether you drink,<sup>2</sup> whether you sleep, whether you are waking, whether you are turning the spit, provided you know how to carry out your duties well, you will profit much in the sight of God, doing all these things because God wishes you to do them.

## CHAPTER XXXVI

*That we ought to have our Spirit Just and Reasonable.*

WE are only men by our reason, and yet it is a rare thing to find men really reasonable, inasmuch as self-love usually leads us astray from reason, conducting us insensibly into a thousand kinds of little but dangerous

<sup>1</sup> St Matt. xxv. 23, "Quia super pauca fuisti fidelis, super multa te constituam."

<sup>2</sup> 1 Cor. x. 31, "Sive ergo manducatis, sive bibitis, sive aliud quid facitis : omnia in gloriam Dei facite."

acts of injustice and wickedness, which, like the little foxes<sup>1</sup> of whom mention is made in the Canticles, destroy the vines. For inasmuch as they are small, we do not take care of them, and because they are so numerous, they do not fail to do much damage. The things I am about to speak about to you, are they not unjust and unreasonable?

We accuse our neighbour for very little, and we excuse ourselves a great deal. We wish to sell at a high price and to buy at a low price. We wish to see justice rendered in the house of another, and mercy and indulgence at home. We wish our word to be taken in good part, and are froward and sensitive as to those of another. We would have our neighbour leave us his goods when we pay the money; is it not more just that he should keep them, and leave us our money? We take it in bad part that he will not accommodate us; has he not more reason to be angry because we will not accommodate him?

If we are attached to one practice, we despise all the rest, and criticise everything which is not to our taste. If there is one of our inferiors who has not shewn good grace, or against whom we have at some time shewn our teeth, whatever he does, we take it badly; we do not cease to vex him and are always quarrelling with him. On the other hand, if some one is agreeable to us in a manner pleasing to our senses there is nothing he does which we do not excuse. There are some children who are virtuous whom their fathers and mothers can scarcely ever see because of some bodily imperfection. There are some who are vicious, who are favourites because of some bodily grace. Upon the whole we prefer the rich to the

<sup>1</sup> Cant. ii. 15, "Capite nobis vulpes parvulas quae demoluntur vineas."

poor, though they be not of better position or so virtuous. We prefer even those who dress best. We wish to exact our rights, but expect others to be courteous in the exaction of theirs. We assert our rank punctiliously, and wish that others should be humble and condescending. We complain lightly of a neighbour, and do not wish any one to complain of us. That which we do for another seems to us always a great deal, that which he does for us seems to us to be nothing. In short, we are like the partridges of Paphlagonia, who have two hearts; <sup>1</sup> for we have one heart which is gentle, gracious, and courteous on our own behalf, and one heart which is hard, severe, and rigorous towards our neighbour. We have two weights, one to weigh our own convenience with greatest advantage to ourselves, the other to weigh that of our neighbour with the greatest disadvantage which is possible. Now, as the Scripture says, "Deceitful lips have spoken in one heart and one heart"; <sup>2</sup> that is to say, they have two hearts. And to have two weights, the one heavy to receive, the other light to give, is a thing abominable before God.<sup>3</sup>

Philothea, be equal and just in your actions. Place yourself always in the position of your neighbour, and place him in yours, and thus you will judge well. Make yourself a seller when you are buying, and a buyer when you are selling, and you will sell and buy justly. All this injustice is mean, because it does not oblige us to make restitution, inasmuch as we remain

<sup>1</sup> "In Paphlagonia bina perdicibus corda" (Plin., Hist. nat., xi. 70).

<sup>2</sup> Ps. xi. 3, "Labia dolosa, in corde et corde locuti sunt" (A.V., Ps. 12).

<sup>3</sup> Prov. xx. 23, "Abominatio est apud Dominum pondus et pondus."

only within the limits of strictness in that which is favourable to ourselves. But it does not clear us of our obligation to make amends, for it is a great fault of reason and charity. And, when all is said, it is only treachery. For we lose nothing by living generously, nobly, courteously, and with a heart that is royal, equal, and reasonable. Remember then, dear Philothea, to examine your heart often, whether it has such regard for your neighbour as you would wish his to have for you if you were in his place; for here is the secret of true reason. Trajan being blamed by his advisers because in their opinion he rendered the imperial majesty too accessible: "Ought I not," said he, "to be such an emperor in regard to private people as I should desire to meet with as an emperor if I were myself a private person?"<sup>1</sup>

## CHAPTER XXXVII

*Of Desires.*

EVERYONE knows that we must protect our desires from vicious things, for the desire of evil makes us evil. But I say more than this to you, dear Philothea. Do not desire at all the things which are dangerous to the soul, such as balls, games, and other pastimes, neither honours nor offices, nor visions and ecstasies. For there is a great deal of peril, vanity, and deceit in such things. Do not desire things which are far distant<sup>2</sup>—that is to say, things which cannot

<sup>1</sup> "Inter alia Trajani dicta, hoc fertur egregium: amicis enim culpantibus quod nimis circa omnes comes esset, respondit talem se imperatorem esse privatis, quales esse sibi imperatores privatus optaret" (Eutrop. Brev., viii. 1)."

<sup>2</sup> "God is the Master of the Scenes; we must not choose which part we shall act; it concerns us only to be careful

come for a long time. Many do so, and by this means tire out and waste their hearts uselessly, and expose themselves to the danger of great anxiety.<sup>1</sup> If a young man has a strong desire to be provided with a position before the time has come, to what end, I ask you, does the desire serve? If a married woman desires to be a religious, what purpose is there in it? If I desire to buy the property of my neighbour before he is ready to sell it, do I not lose my time in this desire? If when I am ill I am desirous of preaching or saying the holy Mass, of visiting others who are ill, and doing the work of those who are in health, are not these desires vain, since at that time it is not in my power to give them effect? And yet these useless desires occupy the place of others which I ought to have, of being quite patient, quite resigned, quite mortified, quite obedient, and quite gentle in my sufferings, which is what God wishes me to practise then. But we usually have the desires of women with child, who wish for fresh cherries in autumn and fresh grapes in spring.

I do not at all approve of a person who, when attached to some duty or calling, trifles with a desire for another kind of life than that which is fitting for his duty, or for practices unsuitable to his present position. For this dissipates the heart and weakens it

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that we do it well, always saying, If this please God, let it be as it is" (Jeremy Taylor, "Holy Living," chap. ii. § 6).

<sup>1</sup> Enjoy the present whatsoever it be, and be not solicitous for the future; for if you take your foot from the present standing and thrust it forward towards to-morrow's event, you are in a restless condition: it is like refusing to quench your present thirst by fearing you shall want drink the next day. If it be well to-day, it is madness to make the present miserable by fearing it may be ill to-morrow" (Jeremy Taylor, "Holy Living," chap. ii. § 6).

in its necessary practices. If I desire the solitude of the Carthusians,<sup>1</sup> I waste my time, and this desire takes the place of that which I ought to have to employ myself well in my present office.<sup>2</sup> No, I would not even have anyone desire to have a better spirit, or better judgment. For those desires are frivolous, and hold the place of that which each one ought to have of cultivating his own, such as it is ; nor would I wish that any should desire means of serving God which he has not got, but that he should use faithfully those which he has. Now this is in reference to desires which occupy the heart. For as to simple wishes, they do no harm, provided they are not frequent.

Do not be desirous of crosses, except in proportion to the manner in which you have been able to bear those which have been given to you. For it is an abuse to desire martyrdom and not to have courage to bear an injury. The enemy often procures us great desires for objects which are absent,<sup>3</sup> and which will never present themselves to us, so as to turn away our spirit from the objects which are present, in which, small as they are, we shall be able to win great advantage. We fight the monsters of Africa in imagination, and for lack of attention we allow ourselves to be killed by the tiniest serpents which are in our path.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Part i. chap. iii. note.

<sup>2</sup> "There are some instances of fortune and a fair condition that cannot stand with some others, but if you desire this you must lose that, and unlesse you be content with one, you lose the comfort of both" (Jeremy Taylor, chap. ii. § 6).

<sup>3</sup> "Si par exemple une personne malade souffre son mal patiemment, cet ennemi de notre salut craignant que par-là elle n'aquiere l'habitude de la patience, lui propose beaucoup d'œuvres saintes qu'elle pourrait faire dans un autre état" ("Combat Spirituel," chap. xxxi.).

Do not be at all desirous of temptations, for this would be rashness. But employ your heart in awaiting them with courage and in defending yourself from them when they come.

A variety of meats (especially if the quantity be great) always surfeits the stomach, and if it is weak, ruins it. Do not fill your soul with many worldly desires, for these will spoil you altogether; nor even with spiritual desires, for they will embarrass you. When our soul is cleansed, and feels itself freed from evil humours, it has a very great appetite for spiritual things, and as if it were altogether stirred, it sets itself to desire a thousand kinds of exercises of piety, of mortification, of humility, of charity, of prayer. It is a good sign, dear Philothea, to have so good an appetite, but look if you can well digest all that you wish to eat. Choose, therefore, by the advice of your spiritual father, among so many desires, those which can be practised. Carry out these and make them of some value. That done, God will send you others, which you will also practise in their season, and thus you will not lose time in useless desires. I do not say that we ought to love every kind of good desire, but I do say that we ought to bring them forth in order, and those which cannot be put into effect at once we should shut up in some corner of our heart until their time is come. Meanwhile, we should practise those whose time is ripe. And this I say not only for those who are spiritual, but for those who are worldly. Without this we shall not know how to live, except with anxiety and pressure.

## CHAPTER XXXVIII

*Counsels for Married People.*<sup>1</sup>

“**M**ARRIAGE is a great Sacrament. I speak in respect of Jesus Christ and His Church”:<sup>2</sup> “it is honourable for all, in all, and in every way,”<sup>3</sup> that is to say, in all its parts. “For all,” for even virgins ought to honour it with humility. “In all,” for it is equally holy among the poor as among the rich. “In every way,” for its origin, its end, its usefulness, its form, and its matter are holy. It is the nursery of Christianity which fills the earth with the faithful to fulfil in heaven the number of the elect, so that the preservation of the benefit of marriage is extremely important to the State, as being the root and the source of all streams.<sup>4</sup>

Would to God that His well-beloved Son were called to all weddings as He was to that of Cana.<sup>5</sup> The wine of consolations and blessings would never be wanting in them. For the reason why there is usually so little of it at the beginning is because in place of our

<sup>1</sup> This and the following chapter are an expansion of the advice given in chapter xii.

<sup>2</sup> Ephes. v. 32, “Sacramentum hoc magnum est, ego autem dico in Christo et in Ecclesia.”

<sup>3</sup> Heb. xiii. 4, “Honorabile connubium in omnibus.”

<sup>4</sup> Some married persons even in their marriage do better please God than some virgins in their state of virginity: They, by giving great example of conjugal affection, by preserving their faith unbroken, by educating children in the fear of God . . . do not only please God, but do it in a higher degree than those virgins whose piety is not answerable to their great opportunities and advantages” (Jeremy Taylor, “Holy Living,” chap. ii. § 3).

<sup>5</sup> St John ii. 2, “Vocatus est autem et Jesus et discipuli ejus ad nuptias.”

Saviour Adonis is called, and Venus in place of our Lady. He who wishes to have lambs which are beautiful and spotted, as Jacob had, must, as he did, present to the sheep when they meet to pair, beautiful rods of different colours.<sup>1</sup> And he who would have a happy success in his marriage, ought to lay before himself the holiness and dignity of this Sacrament. But in place of this, there take place a thousand irregularities in pastimes, feasts, and words. It is not therefore wonderful if the results are irregular.

I exhort married people above all things to cherish the mutual love which the Holy Spirit recommends to them so strongly in the Scripture. O you that are married, it is nothing to say, Love one another with a rational love ! for a pair of turtle-doves do that as well. Nor to say, Love one another with a human love ! for the pagans have indeed practised this love. But I say to you, with the great Apostle : “Husbands, love your wives as Christ loves His Church. Wives, love your husbands as the Church loves her Saviour.”<sup>2</sup> It was God who led Eve to our first parent Adam, and gave her to him for a wife.<sup>3</sup> It is also God, my friends, who, by His invisible hand, has made the knot of the sacred bond of your marriage, and has given you one to the other.<sup>4</sup> Why do you not cherish one another

<sup>1</sup> Gen. xxx. 39, “Factumque est ut in ipso calore coitus oves intuerentur virgas, et parerent maculosa, et varia, et diverso colore respersa.”

<sup>2</sup> Ephes. v. 25, “Viri, diligite uxores vestras, sicut et Christus dilexit ecclesiam.” V. 24, “Sicut Ecclesia subjecta est Christo, ita et mulieres viris suis in omnibus.”

<sup>3</sup> Gen. ii. 22, “Et ædificavit Dominus Deus costam quam tulerat de Adam, in mulierem : et adduxit eam ad Adam.”

<sup>4</sup> Gen. ii. 24, “Quamobrem relinquet homo patrem suum et matrem, et adhærebit uxori suæ : et erunt duo in carne una.”

with a love altogether holy, altogether sacred, altogether divine?

The first effect of this love is the indissoluble union of your hearts. If we glue two pieces of fir together, provided the glue be good, the union will be so strong that we could more readily break the pieces in other places than in the place where they are joined. But God joins the husband to his wife with His own blood. This is why the union is so strong that the soul ought sooner to separate from the body of the one and the other,<sup>1</sup> than the husband from the wife. Now this union is not understood so much of the body as of the heart, of the affection, and of love.

The second effect of this love ought to be the inviolable faithfulness of the one to the other. Seals were in old times graven on rings which were worn on the finger, as even holy Scripture testifies.<sup>2</sup> See then the secret of the ceremony which is performed in weddings. The Church, by the hand of the priest, blesses a ring,<sup>3</sup> and giving

<sup>1</sup> "Those whom God hath joined together let no man put asunder" (Marriage Service of the Church of England).

<sup>2</sup> Esth. viii. 8, "Hæc enim consuetudo erat, ut epistolis, quæ ex regis nomine mittebantur, et illius annulo signatæ erant, nemo audiret contradicere."

<sup>3</sup> "The man shall give unto the woman a ring, laying the same upon the book" (English Marriage Service).

"Tunc revoluta stola a manibus eorum, rogabit num annulus paratus sit sponsæ: qui si præsto sit, quærat num antea fuerit benedictus: si dicatur quod non, tunc benedicat Sacerdos annulum hoc modo: Dominus vobiscum, etc. Oremus. Creator et conservator humani generis, dator gratiæ spiritualis, largitor æternæ salutis, tu Domine mitte benedictionem tuam + super hunc annulum, ut quæ illum gestaverit, sit armata virtute cœlestis defensionis: et proficiat illi ad æternam salutem. Per Christum Dominum nostrum — Oremus. Bene + dic Domine hunc annulum, quem nos in tuo sancto nomine benedicimus; ut quæcunque eum

it<sup>1</sup> first of all to the man, testifies that she puts a seal and signet on his heart by this Sacrament, so that never again shall either the name or the love of any other woman be able to enter into it so long as this one lives who has been given to him."<sup>2</sup> Then the bridegroom places the ring on the hand of the bride herself,<sup>3</sup> that she on her part may know that her heart ought never to receive affection from any other man as long as he whom the Lord has just given her shall live on the earth.<sup>4</sup>

The third fruit of marriage is the production and lawful nurture of children.<sup>5</sup> This is a great honour to you that are married, that God, wishing to multiply

portaverit, in tua pace consistat, et in tua voluntate permaneat, et in tuo amore vivat et crescat et senescat, et multiplicetur in longitudinem dierum. Per Dominum nostrum," etc. ("Pastorale ad usum Romanum," Antwerp, 1598).

<sup>1</sup> "And the priest, taking the ring, shall deliver it unto the man" (English Marriage Service).

"Tunc Sacerdos aspergat illum aqua benedicta, et inserat illum digito annulari dextræ manus Sponsæ, aut alii, secundum morem loci, dicendo: Accipe anulum fidei matrimonialis, in nomine sanctissimæ Trinitatis; ut illum portans, sis armata virtute cœlestis defensionis, et proficiat tibi ad salutem æternam" ("Pastorale," Antwerp, 1598).

The use of Geneva, referred to by St Francis, is nearer to the English use than that of Mechlen.

<sup>2</sup> "And forsaking all other, keep thee only unto her, so long as ye both shall live" (English Marriage Service).

<sup>3</sup> "Unto the man, to put it upon the fourth finger of the woman's left hand. And the man, holding the ring there, and taught by the priest, shall say: with this ring I thee wed," etc. (English Marriage Service).

<sup>4</sup> "And, forsaking all other, keep thee unto him, so long as ye both shall live" (English Marriage Service).

<sup>5</sup> "It was ordained for the procreation of children to be brought up in the fear and nurture of the Lord, and to the praise of his holy Name" (English Marriage Service).

the souls who may bless and praise Him to all eternity, makes you workers together with Him in so great a work by the production of the bodies in which He sheds the souls, like heavenly drops, creating them as He does create them by infusing them into the body.

Preserve, therefore, O husbands, a tender, constant, and cordial love towards your wives. For this purpose the wife was drawn from the side nearest the heart of the first man, that she might be loved by him cordially and tenderly.<sup>1</sup> The weaknesses and infirmities of your wives ought not to provoke you to disdain of any kind, but rather to a gentle and loving compassion. For God has created them to this end, that being dependent on you, you may receive from them more honour and respect, and that you should have them thus as companions, and yet may be their heads and superiors. And you, O wives, love the husbands whom God has given to you tenderly, cordially, but with a love respectful and full of reverence. For truly, God for this reason has created them of a sex more vigorous and predominant, and has wished that the woman should be in dependence on the man, bone of his bones, flesh of his flesh,<sup>2</sup> and that she should be produced from his side, drawn from under his arms, to show that she ought to be under the hand and guidance of the husband. And all Holy Scriptures recommend this subjection plainly to you, and at the same time the same Scripture renders it gentle to you, not only wishing that you shall accommodate yourselves to it with love, but ordering your husbands

<sup>1</sup> This belief is still held in England, and for the same reason.

<sup>2</sup> Gen. ii. 23, "Dixitque Adam: Hoc nunc, os ex ossibus meis, et caro de carne mea: hæc vocabitur virago, quoniam de viro sumpta est,"

to exercise it with great delight, tenderness, and sweetness. "Husbands," says St Peter, "behave discreetly with your wives, as with a vessel more fragile, showing her honour."<sup>1</sup>

But whilst I exhort you to increase more and more this mutual love which you owe one to another, take care that it is not changed into jealousy of any kind. For it often happens that the worm is produced in the most delicate and the ripest apple. In like manner, jealousy is born in the warmest and most devoted love of married people, the substance of which nevertheless it spoils and corrupts. For little by little it produces quarrels, dissensions, and divorce. As a fact, jealousy never comes where friendship is mutually founded on true virtue. This is why it is an unmistakable sign of the somewhat sensual and gross love which has been directed to a place where it has met with virtue which is imperfect, inconstant, and subject to disturbance. It is, therefore, a foolish vaunting of friendship to wish to exalt it by jealousy. For jealousy is indeed a mark of the greatness and grossness of friendship, but not of its goodness, purity, and perfection, since the perfection of friendship presupposes an assurance of the virtue of the thing which is loved, and jealousy presupposes its uncertainty.

If you wish, O husbands, that your wives should be faithful to you, give them a lesson by your example. "With what face" (says St Gregory Nazianzen) "will you exact chastity from your wives if you yourselves do not live in chastity? How will you ask of them what you will not give them? If you wish them to be honest, behave yourselves honestly

<sup>1</sup> 1 Peter iii. 7, "Viri similiter cohabitantes secundum scientiam, quasi infirmiori vasculo muliebri impartientes honorem tanquam et coheredibus gratiæ vitæ."

with them.”<sup>1</sup> And as St Paul says : “ Let each one know how to possess his vessel in holiness.”<sup>2</sup> If, on the contrary, you yourselves teach them dishonesty, it is not surprising that you have dishonour in their ruin. But you, O women, whose honour is inseparably joined with chastity and honesty, preserve your glory jealously, and do not allow any kind of dissoluteness to tarnish the whiteness of your reputation.

Fear all kinds of attack, however small they be. Do not permit any wantonness about you. Whosoever offers to praise your heart or your grace ought to be held in suspicion. For whosoever praises merchandise which he cannot buy is usually greatly tempted to steal it. But if to your praise any one adds contempt of your husband, he offers you the greatest insult, for it is then clear that he not only wishes your ruin, but considers you already half ruined, since the half of the bargain is struck with the second merchant when we are disgusted with the first. Ladies of old and of modern times, says Pliny,<sup>3</sup> have been accustomed to hang pearls in numbers on their ears for the pleasure that they have in feeling them jingle when they touch one another. But for my part, as I know that Isaac, the great friend of God, sent earrings as the first declaration of his love for the chaste Rebecca,<sup>4</sup> so I

<sup>1</sup> “ Qua igitur fronte pudicitiam exigis, quam ipse vicissim non præstas? Quomodo quod non das petis? Quomodo corpori pari honore prædito imparem legem statuis ” (St Greg. Naz. Orat. xxxvii. n. 7), cp. Migne.

<sup>2</sup> 1 Thess. iv. 4, “ Ut sciat unusquisque vestrum vas suum possidere in sanctificatione et honore.”

<sup>3</sup> “ Uniones suspendere binos ac ternos auribus feminarum gloria est. Ceu sono quoque gaudeant et collisu ipso margaritarum ” (Plin. Hist. Nat. ix. 56).

<sup>4</sup> Gen. xxiv. 47, “ Suspendi itaque inaures ad ornandam faciem ejus.”

believe that this mystical ornament signifies that the first thing that a husband ought to have from his wife, and that the wife ought faithfully to guard, is the ear, that no language or names should enter there, but the gentle and delightful jingling of the chaste and modest words which are the gold and pearls of the Gospel. For we ought always to remember that we poison souls by the ear, as we poison bodies by the mouth.

Love and faithfulness joined together always produce intimacy and confidence. This is why the saints have made so much use of mutual caresses in their marriage, caresses indeed loving, but chaste, tender, but sincere. So Isaac and Rebecca, the most chaste couple of married people of ancient times, were seen through the window caressing each other in such a way that although there was nothing immodest in it, Abimelech well knew that they could only be husband and wife.<sup>1</sup> The great St Louis, equally rigorous in his flesh, as tender in his love for his wife, was almost blamed for being lavish with such caresses, though in truth he rather deserved to be praised for knowing how to lay aside his warlike and courageous spirit to fulfil the little duties required for the preservation of conjugal love. For though these little demonstrations of pure and frank friendship do not bind hearts, they bring them together, and serve as an agreeable disposition of mutual intercourse.

St Monica when in child with the great St Augustine dedicated him by frequent offerings to the Christian religion, and to the service of the glory of God, as he himself testifies, saying: "that he had already tasted the salt of God in the womb of his

<sup>1</sup> Gen. xxvi. 8, "Prospiciens Abimelech rex Palæstinarum per fenestram, vidit eum jocantem cum Rebecca uxore sua."

mother.”<sup>1</sup> It is a great lesson for Christian wives to offer to the Divine Majesty the fruit of their womb, even before it has come forth.<sup>2</sup> For God, who accepts the duties of a heart which is humble and willing, usually assists the good affections of mothers at such a time; witness Samuel,<sup>3</sup> St Thomas Aquinas, St Andrew of Fiesole,<sup>4</sup> and several others. The mother of St Bernard, a worthy mother of such a son, taking her children in her arms as soon as they were born, used to offer them to Jesus Christ, and henceforth loved them with reverence as a sacred gift which God had entrusted to her.<sup>5</sup> And this succeeded very happily in her case, for they were all seven most saintly.

But when children have come into the world, and

<sup>1</sup> “*Condiebar Domini sale jam inde ab utero matris meæ*” (St Aug. Conf. i. chap. xi. t. i. 75-76).

<sup>2</sup> “*Mme de Boisy surtout ne crut pas devoir moins faire que de consacrer au Service du Seigneur l’enfant qu’elle avait tant désiré; car un de ces instincts mystérieux que seules connaissent les mères, lui faisait sentir que cet enfant (St Francois de Sales) serait grand dans les desseins de Dieu. Aussi renouvelait-elle souvent son offrande au pied des autels*” (Vie de St François, Pérennés, i. 2).

<sup>3</sup> 1 Kgs. (1 S.) i. 11, “*Et votum vovit (Anna), dicens: . . . dabo eum Domino omnibus diebus vitæ ejus, et novacula non ascendet super caput ejus.*”

<sup>4</sup> “*Migravit etiam ad cœlestem immortalitatem per id tempus B. Andreas Corsinus patria Florentinus episc. Fesulanus quem parentes pie Deiparæ virgini sacrarant*” (Annales Eccles. Raynald, ann. 1373, § 27).

<sup>5</sup> “*Mater Aleth, ex castro cui nomen Mons Barus; et ipsa in ordine suo, apostolicam regulam tenens subdita viro, sub eo secundum timorem Dei domum suam regebat. . . . Septem quippe liberos genuit non tam viro suo quam Deo, sex mares, feminam unam: mares omnes monachos futuros, feminam sanctimoniam. Deo namque (ut dictum est) non seculo generans, singulos mox ut partu ediderat, ipsa manibus propriis Domino offerebat*” (Vit. St Bern. i. 1).

are beginning to have the use of reason, their fathers and mothers ought to take great care to impress upon their hearts the fear of God. The good Queen Blanche performed this office ardently in regard to the King St Louis, her son, for she used to say to him frequently: "I would sooner see you die before my eyes than see you commit a single mortal sin.<sup>1</sup> And this remained so graven in the soul of this holy son, that, as he himself used to tell, there was not a day in his life on which he did not remember it, taking as much trouble as he could to keep faithfully this divine teaching. Indeed, races and generations are called in our language houses, and the Hebrews themselves call the generation of the children the building up of the house.<sup>2</sup> For it is in this sense that it is said that God built houses for the midwives of Egypt. Now this is to show that to make a good house is not to fill it full of worldly goods, but to educate the children carefully in the fear of God and in virtue.

And in this we ought not to spare any sort of trouble or labour, since children are the crown of their father and mother.

Thus did St Monica struggle with so much fervour and constancy against the evil inclinations of St Augustine, that following him by sea and by land, she made him more happily the child of her tears by the conversion of his soul than he had been the child of her blood by the generation of his body.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> "Prius permetteret ipsam mori, quam semel peccando mortaliter suum offendere Creatorem. Hoc ego ab ore ipsius domini Regis audiui" (Vit. Ganfridi, ch. i).

<sup>2</sup> Ex. i. 21, "Et quia timuerunt obstetrices Deum, ædificavit eis domos."

<sup>3</sup> "Fieri non potest, ut filius istarum lacrymarum pereat" (St. Aug. Conf. iii. chap. xii. t. i. 96).

St Paul leaves to wives as their portion the care of the house.<sup>1</sup> This is why many have this very opinion that their devotion is more profitable to the family than that of the husband, since he does not live so much among the servants and is not able in consequence to direct them so easily in the way of virtue. For this reason, Solomon, in his Proverbs, makes the happiness of all the house to depend upon the care and industry of the strong woman whom he describes.<sup>2</sup>

It is said in Genesis that Isaac, when he saw his wife Rebecca barren, prayed to the Lord for her ; or, according to the Hebrew, he prayed the Lord opposite to her, because one prayed on one side of the oratory, the other on the other.<sup>3</sup> So the prayer of the husband made in this manner was granted. The greatest and most fruitful union of husband and wife is that which is made in holy devotion, in which they ought to strive to emulate one another. There are fruits like the quince, which, from the sharpness of their juice, are scarcely agreeable except when preserved. There are others which by their tenderness and delicacy cannot be kept unless they are preserved, such as cherries and apricots. So women ought to wish that their husbands should be preserved in the sugar of devotion ; for a man without devotion is a harsh, rough, and rude animal. And husbands ought to wish their wives to be devout ; for without devotion, the woman is very fragile and subject to fall from or to become tarnished in virtue. St Paul has said that the faithless man is

<sup>1</sup> Tit. ii. 5, "Domus curam habentes."

<sup>2</sup> Prov. xxxi. 27, "Consideravit semitas domus suæ, et panem otiosa non comedit."

<sup>3</sup> Gen. xxv. 21, "Deprecatusque est Isaac Dominum pro uxore sua, eo quod esset sterilis : qui exaudivit eum, et dedit conceptum Rebeccæ." The Hebrew will not bear the interpretation (Ges. Lex).

sanctified by the faithful woman, and the faithless woman by the faithful man,<sup>1</sup> because in the strict alliance of marriage the one is easily able to draw the other to virtue. But what a blessing it is when the man and the wife being both faithful sanctify one another in the true fear of the Lord!

For the rest, the mutual support of one to the other ought to be so great that both should never be angry together and all at once, that there should never be seen dissension or discussion. Bees cannot stay in a place where there are echoes, and the reverberations and redoublings of voices; nor indeed can the Holy Spirit dwell in a house in which there are disputes, replies, retorts, outcries and altercations.

St Gregory Nazianzen witnesses that in his time married people kept as a festival the anniversary of their wedding day.<sup>2</sup> Indeed, I should approve of the introduction of this custom, provided that it should not be with the provision of worldly and sensual recreations, but that the husband and wife should confess and communicate on that day, recommending to God more fervently than usual the progress of their marriage, renewing the good resolutions of sanctifying it more and more by mutual friendship and faithfulness, and recovering breath in our Lord for the support of the duties of their calling.

<sup>1</sup> I Cor. vii. 14, "Sanctificatus est enim vir infidelis per mulierem fidelem, et sanctificata est mulier infidelis per virum fidelem."

<sup>2</sup> "Quoniam heri splendidum Luminum diem celebravimus; salutem etenim nostram lætitia prosequi conveniebat ac multo quidem magis quam carnis amici dies eos quotannis celebrant quibus vel nati vel matrimonio juncti sunt . . ." (St Greg. Naz. Orat. xl.).

## CHAPTER XXXIX

*Of the Modesty of the Marriage Bed.*

THE marriage bed ought to be unspotted,<sup>1</sup> as the Apostle calls it, that is to say, exempt from all wantonness and other profane defilements. Holy marriage also was first instituted in the earthly Paradise, where up to now there has never been any excess of concupiscence nor anything immodest.

There is some resemblance between shameful pleasures and those of eating,<sup>2</sup> for both concern the flesh; though the former, by reason of their brutal vehemence, are called simply carnal. I will explain, then, that which I cannot say of the one by that which I say of the other.

1. Eating is ordained for our preservation. Now, as eating simply to nourish and preserve our persons is a good thing, holy and commanded, so that which is required in marriage for the production of children<sup>3</sup> and the multiplication of persons is a good thing, and most holy, for it is the principal end of marriage.

2. To eat, not for the preservation of life, but for the preservation of the mutual intercourse and condescension which we owe one to another, is a thing most just and modest. Likewise the natural and legitimate satisfaction of the parties in holy marriage is called by St Paul a duty; but a duty so great, that he does not wish one of the parties to be exempt from it without the free and voluntary consent of the other,

<sup>1</sup> 1 Heb. xiii. 4, "Thorus immaculatus."

<sup>2</sup> "Against the Third, *i.e.* the moderation of Christian modesty, is all immoderate use of permitted beds; concerning which judgment is to be made as concerning meats and drinks" (Jeremy Taylor "Holy Living," ii. § 3).

<sup>3</sup> Chap. xxxviii. note.

not even for the exercise of devotion,<sup>1</sup> which has led me to say the word I have placed in the chapter on the Holy Communion in regard to this.<sup>2</sup> How much less, then, ought we to be exempt from it by the captious pretensions of virtue, or by anger and contempt?<sup>3</sup>

3. As those who eat for the duty of mutual intercourse ought to eat freely, and not as it were by force, and to endeavour to bear witness to their appetite, so the marriage duty ought always to be rendered faithfully, frankly, and after the same manner as if it were rendered with the hope of the production of children, although on some occasions there might not be such a hope.

4. To eat, not for the two former reasons, but simply to content the appetite, is a thing tolerable, but not, however, praiseworthy. For the simple pleasure of the sensual appetite cannot be an object sufficient to make an action praiseworthy. Let it suffice that it is tolerable.

5. To eat, not by simple appetite, but by excess of irregularity, is a thing more or less to be blamed, according as the excess is great or small.<sup>4</sup>

6. Now, excess of eating does not consist solely in too great a quantity, but also, in the fashion and manner of eating. It is a fact, dear Philothea, that the honey

<sup>1</sup> 1 Cor. vii. 3, "Uxori vir debitum reddat: similiter autem et uxor viro."

<sup>2</sup> Part ii. chap. xx.

<sup>3</sup> "That when duty is demanded it be alwaies payed (so farre as is in our powers and election) according to the foregoing measures, *i.e.* so as to consist with health, and so as not to be too expensive of time" (Jeremy Taylor, "Holy Living," chap. ii. § 3).

<sup>4</sup> "Only let each of them be temperate, and both of them be modest" (Jeremy Taylor, "Holy Living," chap. ii. § 3).

which is fitting and wholesome for bees may nevertheless be so hurtful that sometimes it makes them ill, as when they eat too much of it in the spring ; for it gives them a looseness of stomach, and sometimes causes them to die without remedy, as when they are covered with honey up to the head and the wings. In truth, the marriage intercourse, which is so holy, so just, so commendable, so useful to the State, is nevertheless in certain cases dangerous to those who practise it, for at times it makes their souls very ill with venial sin. This happens when the order established for the production of children is violated and perverted. And in this case, according as we wander more or less from this order, the sins are found more or less execrable, but always bestial.<sup>1</sup> For inasmuch as the procreation of children is the principal end of marriage, we can never lawfully depart from the order which is required, although for some other accident it may not at that particular time be carried into effect. This happens when barrenness or the fact of being already with child prevents production and generation. For in these cases, the bodily intercourse does not cease to be just and holy, provided that the rules of generation be followed ; an accident never being able to interfere with the law which the principal end of marriage has imposed. Certainly the infamous and

<sup>1</sup> “Concerning which, our best rule is that although in this, as in eating and drinking, there is an appetite to be satisfied, which cannot be done without pleasing that desire, yet since that desire and satisfaction was intended by Nature for other ends, they should never be separate from those ends, but alwaies be joyned with all or one of those ends ; with a desire of children, or to avoid fornication, or to lighten and ease the cares and sadnesses of household affairs or to endear each other ; but never with a purpose either in act or desire to separate the sensuality from those ends which hallow it” (Jeremy Taylor, “Holy Living,” chap. ii. § 3).

execrable action which Onan performed in his marriage was detestable before God, as the sacred text says in the thirty-eighth chapter of Genesis.<sup>1</sup> And although some heretics of our age, a hundred times more to be blamed than the Cynics (of whom St Jerome speaks in the Epistle to the Ephesians),<sup>2</sup> have wished to say that it was the perverse intention of the wicked man which was displeasing to God, the Scripture nevertheless speaks otherwise and asserts positively that the thing itself which he did was detestable and abominable in the sight of God.<sup>3</sup>

7. It is a true mark of a beggarly, base, abject, and infamous spirit to think of the meats and dishes before meal-time, and still more so when we are interested after dinner in the pleasure we have had in eating, entertaining ourselves with it by words and thoughts, and allowing our spirit to wallow in the memory of the pleasure we have had in swallowing the morsels. When we do so, we are like those who before dinner turn their spirit to the spit and after dinner to the dishes, people

<sup>1</sup> Gen. xxxviii. 10, "Et idcirco percussit eum Dominus, quod rem detestabilem faceret."

<sup>2</sup> "Nisi Philosophorum quidam Cynicus exstisset, qui doceret omnem titillationem carnis, et flammam seminis ex qualiquumque attritu tactuque venientem, in tempore non vitandum; et nonnulli sapientes sæculi in hanc turpem et erubescendam hæresim consensissent, numquam sanctus Apostolus scribens ad Ephesios, ad fornicationem etiam omnem immunditiam copulasset, et ad immunditiam junxisset avaritiam" (St Jer. Comment. ad Ephs. v. 3, t. iv. part i.).

<sup>3</sup> "Onan did separate his act from its proper end, and so ordered his embraces that his wife should not conceive, and God punished him" (Jeremy Taylor, "Holy Living," chap. ii. § 3).

<sup>4</sup> St Francis and Jeremy Taylor are in this matter agreed, that all such means of limiting the number of children is abominable in the sight of God.

worthy of being the scullions of the kitchen, who make, as St Paul says, a god of their belly.<sup>1</sup> Men of honour do not think of the table except when they sit down, and after dinner wash their hands and their mouth so as no longer to have either the taste or the smell of those things which they have eaten. The Elephant is but a gross beast, yet is the most worthy of those which live on the earth, and has the most sense. I will tell you a mark of his modesty. He never changes his mate, and loves tenderly the one that he has chosen, with whom nevertheless he has intercourse only once every three years, and then only for five days, and so secretly that he has never been seen in that act. But he is seen again on the sixth day; and then before everything else he goes straight to some river, in which he thoroughly washes his whole body, since he has no wish to return to the herd before he has cleansed himself.<sup>2</sup> Are not these good and modest habits in such an animal? And does he not by his example invite the married in no way to remain engaged in their affection for the sensual and pleasurable duties which they have practised according to their calling, but to wash their heart and their affection and to cleanse themselves as soon as possible when they are over, that afterwards with all freedom of spirit they may practise other actions which are more pure and exalted?<sup>3</sup> In this counsel consists the perfect

<sup>1</sup> Phil. iii. 19, "Quorum Deus venter est."

<sup>2</sup> "Elephanti pudore nunquam nisi in abdito coeunt. Initur autem quinis (ut ferunt) cujusque anni diebus; sexto, perfunduntur omne ante reduces ad agmen. Non adulteria novere, etc." (Plin. Hist. Nat. viii. 5; Arist. Hist. Animal. v. 14).

<sup>3</sup> "Married persons by consent are to abstain from their mutual entertainments at solemn times of devotion: not as a duty of itself necessary, but as being the most proper act of purity which in their condition they can present to God:

practice of the excellent teaching that St Paul gives to the Corinthians: "The time is short," he says; "it remains that those who have wives should be as those who have none."<sup>1</sup> For, according to St Gregory, he has a wife as if he had none who so takes bodily consolations with her that for that purpose he is in no way turned from spiritual pretentions.<sup>2</sup> Now what is said of the husbands is understood mutually of the wife. "Let those who use the world," says the same Apostle, "be as those who use it not."<sup>3</sup> Let all then use the world, each one according to his vocation; but in such a way that not engaging all his affection in it, he may be as free and ready to serve God as if he used it not. It is a great evil in man, says St Augustine,<sup>4</sup> to wish to enjoy things which he ought only to use, and to wish to use those which he ought only to enjoy. We ought to enjoy things spiritual, and only use things corporal, of which when the use is turned into enjoyment our reasonable soul is likewise turned into a soul which is brutal and bestial.

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and being a good advantage for attending their preparation to the solemn duty, and their demeanour in it. It is Saint Paul's counsel, that by consent for a time they should abstain, that they may give themselves to fasting and prayer" (Jeremy Taylor, "Holy Living," chap. ii. § 3).

<sup>1</sup> 1 Cor. vii. 29, "Hoc itaque dico, fratres: Tempus breve est, reliquum est, ut et qui habent uxores, tanquam non habentes sint."

<sup>2</sup> Uxorem habet, sed quasi non habens, qui sic scit debita carnis exsolvere, ut tamen per eam mundo tota mente non cogatur inhærere" (St Greg. Mag. Lib. ii., Hom. 37 in Evang.

<sup>3</sup> 1 Cor. vii. 31, "Et qui utuntur hoc mundo, tanquam non utantur."

<sup>4</sup> "Omnis itaque humana perversio est, quod etiam vitium vocatur, fruendis uti velle atque utendis frui" (St Aug., de div. quæst., Lib. i. qu. 30, t. vi. 8).

I think I have said all I wished to say, and made very clear without saying it that which I did not wish to say.

## CHAPTER XL

*Counsels for Widows.*<sup>1</sup>

ST PAUL instructs all Prelates in the person of St Timothy, saying: "Honour widows who are widows indeed."<sup>2</sup> Now, to be a widow indeed, three things are necessary.

1. That the widow be not only a widow in body but also in heart, that is to say, that she be resolved, with an inviolable resolution, to keep in the state of chaste widowhood. For widows, who are only widows whilst awaiting the opportunity of re-marriage are only separated from men according to the pleasures of the body, and are already joined with them according to the will of the heart. But if the true widow, to strengthen herself in the state of widowhood, wishes to offer to God, under a vow, her body and her chastity, she will add a great ornament to her widowhood, and will give great strength to her resolution. For seeing that after she has made her vow it is no longer in her power to give up her chastity without giving up Paradise at the same time, she will be so jealous of her design that she will not permit even the least thought of marriage to stay in her heart one single moment.<sup>3</sup> And so this sacred vow

<sup>1</sup> This is expanded from the advice in chapter xii.

<sup>2</sup> 1 Tim v. 3, "Viduas honora, quæ vere viduæ sunt."

<sup>3</sup> "A widow that desires her widowhood should be a state pleasing to God, must spend her time as devoted virgins should, in fastings, and prayers, and charity" (Jeremy Taylor, "Holy Living," chap. ii. § 3).

will place a strong barrier between her soul and all kinds of projects contrary to her resolution. Certainly, St Augustine strongly commends this vow to the Christian widow;<sup>1</sup> and the ancient and learned Origen goes very much further, for he advises married women to vow themselves and destine themselves to the chastity of widowhood in case their husbands should happen to die before them, that among the sensual pleasures which they will be able to have in their marriage they may yet be able to enjoy the merit of a chaste widowhood by means of this promise anticipated.<sup>2</sup> The vow makes works done in consequence of it more agreeable to God, strengthens the courage to do them, and not only gives to God the works which are, as it were, the fruits of a good will, but dedicates also to Him the will itself, which is, as it were, the tree of our actions. By simple chastity we lend our bodies to God, retaining, however, the liberty of submitting it at other times to sensual pleasures; but by the vow of chastity we make an absolute and irrevocable gift of it to Him, without reserving to ourselves any power of receding from it, thus making ourselves happily the slave of Him whose bondage is better than any kingdom. Now,

<sup>1</sup> "Si ergo nondum Deo vovisses continentiam vidualem exhortaremur profecto ut voveres, quia vero jam vovisti, exhortamur ut perseveres" (St Aug. De bono vid. chap. xix.).

<sup>2</sup> "Bonum est et primum, si qua potest virginitatis gratiam possidere. Si autem hoc non potuerit, sed evenerit ei ut perdat virum, vidua perseveret. Quod quidem non solum post mortem viri, sed etiam cum ille vivit debet habere in animo, ut etiam si non venerit voluntas ipsius et propositum, a Domino coronetur, et dicat: Hoc voveo atque promitto si mihi humanum aliquid quod non opto contigerit, nihil aliud faciam quam incontaminata viduaque perseverem" (Orig. in Luc. Hom. xvii. t. iii. 953).

as I wholly approve of the advice of these two great men, so I would desire that the souls who will be so happy as to follow it, may do so with prudence, with holiness, with firmness, having thoroughly looked into their courage, invoked heavenly inspiration, and taken the advice of some wise and devout director. For thus all will work out more fruitfully.

2. Besides this, it is necessary that the renunciation of a second marriage should be done purely and simply, so as with greater purity to turn all our affections Godward, and to unite our heart on every side with that of His Divine Majesty. For if the desire of leaving her children rich or some other kind of worldly pretext keep the widow in her widowhood, she will perhaps be praised for it, but certainly not in the sight of God, since in God's sight nothing can have real praise but that which is done for God.

3. It is, moreover, necessary that the widow, to be a widow indeed, should be separated from, and voluntarily deprived of, proper delight.<sup>1</sup> "The widow who lives in pleasures," says St Paul, "is dead while she lives."<sup>2</sup> To wish to be a widow, and yet to have pleasure in being courted, caressed, fondled; to wish to be present at balls, at dances, and at entertainments; to wish to be perfumed, dressed up, and pretty, is to be a widow alive in body but dead in

<sup>1</sup> "For widows, the fontinel of whose desires hath been opened by the former permissions of the marriage-bed, they must remember: 1 That God hath now restrained the former license, bound up their eyes, and shut up their heart into a narrower compasse, and have given them sorrow to be a bridle to their desires. A widow must be a mourner, and she that is not, cannot so well secure the chastity of her proper state" (Jeremy Taylor, "Holy Living," chap. ii. § 3).

<sup>2</sup> 1 Tim. v. 6, "Nam quæ in deliciis est, vivens mortua est."

soul. What does it matter, I ask you, whether the sign of the inn of Adonis and of profane love be made by a white tuft of feathers set up in the form of a plume, or by crape spread in the manner of a net all round the face? Often indeed the black is placed on the white to the advantage of variety, to show it off the better. The widow, having made trial of the fashion with which women are able to please men, casts the more dangerous snares within their spirits. The widow, then, who lives in such foolish delight, though alive, is dead, and is, properly speaking, only an idol of widowhood.

"The time of pruning is come, the voice of the turtle has been heard in the land,"<sup>1</sup> says the Canticle. The pruning of worldly excesses is required of any one who wishes to live piously. But it is especially necessary to the true widow, who, like a chaste dove, has only quite lately wept, mourned, lamented over the loss of her husband.<sup>2</sup> When Naomi returned from Moab to Bethlehem, the women of the town, who had known her at the commencement of her marriage, said: "Is not this Naomi?" But she replied: "Call me not Naomi, I pray you (for Naomi means gracious and beautiful), but call me Mara; for the Lord hath filled my heart with bitterness."<sup>3</sup> She said

<sup>1</sup> Cant. ii. 12, "Tempus putationis advenit: vox turturis audita est in terra nostra."

<sup>2</sup> "A widow must restrain her memory and her fancy: not recalling or recounting her former permissions and freer licenses with any present delight: for then she opens that sluice which her husband's death and her own sorrow have shut up" (Jeremy Taylor, chap. ii. § 3).

<sup>3</sup> Ruth i. 19, 20, "Dicebantque mulieres: Hæc est illa Noemi. Quibus ait: Ne vocetis me Noemi (id est pulchram) sed vocate me Mara (id est, amaram) quia amaritudine valde replevit me Omnipotens."

this, because her husband was dead. So the devout widow ought never to be called or regarded as beautiful or gracious, being content to be what He wishes her to be, that is to say, humble and lowly in her own eyes.

Lamps of which the oil is aromatic put forth a sweeter smell when their flame is extinguished. So widows, whose love has been pure in their marriage, spread a greater perfume of virtue and chastity when their light, that is to say, their husband, is extinguished by death. To love the husband as long as he is alive is a thing common enough amongst women, but to love him so much after his death as not to wish for another, this is a degree of love which only belongs to true widows. To hope in God, whilst the husband is a means of support, is nothing very rare; but to hope in God when deprived of this support, is a thing worthy of great praise.<sup>1</sup> This is why we recognise more easily in widowhood than in marriage the perfection of virtue.

The widow whose children have need of her attention and guidance, and especially in that which concerns their soul and the settling of their life, cannot and ought not in any way to abandon them. For the Apostle St Paul says plainly that they are pledged to this care, so as to render the same to their father and mother,<sup>2</sup> and so much so that if anyone does not care for his own relations, and especially those of his own family, he is worse than an infidel.<sup>3</sup> But if the

<sup>1</sup> 1 Tim. v. 5, "Quæ autem vere vidua est, et desolata, speret in Deum."

<sup>2</sup> 1 Tim. v. 4, "Si qua autem vidua filios, aut nepotes habet: discat primum domum suam regere, et mutuam vicem reddere parentibus: hoc enim acceptum est coram Deo."

<sup>3</sup> 1 Tim. v. 8, "Si quis autem suorum, et maxime domesticorum curam non habet, fidem negavit, et est infideli deterior."

children are of an age when they have no need of being guided, then the widow should gather up all her affections and thought to apply them more purely to her own advancement in the love of God. Unless some strong reason forces the conscience of the true widow to external matters of business, such as law-suits, I advise her to abstain altogether from them, and to follow the method of managing her affairs which will be the most peaceful and tranquil, though it may not seem the most fruitful. For the fruits of worry must be very great to be comparable to those of a holy tranquillity, let alone that law-suits and such disputes dissipate the heart and open the door frequently to the enemies of chastity; whilst to please those of whose favour we have need, we have to use such behaviour as is unfitting for devotion and disagreeable to God.

Let prayer be the continual exercise of the widow,<sup>1</sup> for, as she ought no longer to have any love but for God, no more ought she to have any words but for God. And as iron when prevented from following the attraction of the magnet because of the presence of the diamond, darts towards the same magnet as soon as the diamond is removed,<sup>2</sup> so the heart of the widow, which cannot well dart altogether Godward, nor follow the attraction of His Divine love, during the life of her husband, ought at once after his death to run eagerly to the odour of heavenly perfumes, as it were saying, in imitation of the sacred Bride: "O Lord, now that I am all my own, receive me as

<sup>1</sup> 1 Tim. v. 5, "Quæ autem vere vidua est, instet orationibus et orationibus nocte et die."

<sup>2</sup> "Adamas dissidet cum magnete lapide in tantum ut juxta positus ferrum non patiat attrahi" (Plin. Hist. Nat. xxxvii. 15).

Thine altogether, draw me after Thee; we will run after the odour of Thine ointments.”<sup>1</sup> The practice of the virtues proper to the holy widow are perfect modesty, the forsaking of honours, of rank, of entertainments, of titles, and of vanity of all kinds; the ministry of the poor and the sick, the comfort of the afflicted, the introduction of girls to the devout life. She will be a perfect example of all virtues to young women. Necessity and simplicity are the two ornaments of their dress; humility and chastity the two ornaments of their actions; integrity and kindness the two ornaments of their language; modesty and purity the ornaments of their eyes; and Jesus Christ crucified the only love of their hearts.

In short, the true widow is in the Church a little March violet, and sheds around a matchless sweetness by the odour of her devotion. She keeps herself almost always hidden under the large leaves of her humility, and by her less dazzling colours testifies to her mortification. She comes in places which are fresh and uncultivated, not willing to be pressed by the intercourse of the worldly, so as better to preserve the freshness of her heart against all the heat which the desire of riches, of honour, of love even may bring to it. “She will be happy,” says the holy Apostle, “if she persevere in this way.”<sup>2</sup> I should have many more things to say on this subject, but I shall have said all when I have said that the widow jealous of the honour of her position should read attentively the beautiful epistles which the great St Jerome wrote to Furia and to Salvia, and to all those other ladies

<sup>1</sup> Cant. i. 3, “Trahe me: post te curremus in odorem unguentorum tuorum.”

<sup>2</sup> 1 Cor. vii. 8, “Dico autem non nuptis et viduis: bonum est illis si sic permaneant, sicut et ego.”

who were so happy as to be the spiritual daughters of so great a Father.<sup>1</sup> For nothing can be added to that which he says to them except this counsel, that the true widow ought neither to blame nor to censure those who pass to a second, or even a third or a fourth marriage, for in certain cases God thus disposes of them to His greater glory. And we should always have before our eyes the teaching of the ancients, that neither widowhood nor virginity has any other rank at all in heaven than that which is assigned them by humility.

## CHAPTER XLI

*A Word to Virgins.*<sup>2</sup>

○ VIRGINS,<sup>3</sup> if you are looking forward to marriage in the world, keep jealously your first love for your first husband. I think that it is a great deception to offer in place of a heart which is whole and sincere, a heart altogether used up, drugged, and

<sup>1</sup> Extracts from these letters of St Jerome are printed in cols. 279-314 of Migne's edition of the works of St Francis. They will be found in the Oxford edition of the "Letters of St Jerome, Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers," vol. vi. The following are the numbers and references in the Benedictine edition:—

(Oxf. 54)	Ep. xlvii.	ad Furiam	T. iv. pt. ii. 554-562.
(Oxf. 79)	Ep. lxxxv.	ad Salvinam	do. 663-669.
(Oxf. 38)	Ep. xix.	ad Marcellam	do. 49- 51.
(Oxf. 39)	Ep. xxii.	ad Paulam	do. 54- 60.
(Oxf. 108)	Ep. lxxxvi.	ad Eustochium	do. 669-689.
(Oxf. 23)	Ep. xx.	ad Marcellam	do. 51- 52.
(Oxf. 127)	Ep. xcvi.	ad Principiam	do. 778-783.

<sup>2</sup> This chapter is also based upon the advice in chapter xii.

<sup>3</sup> Migne, "I have only these three words to say to you, for the rest you will find elsewhere."

wearied with love. But if your happiness calls you to chaste and virginal spiritual marriage, and you wish always to preserve your virginity, O God, preserve your love as delicately as you can for that Divine Bridegroom.<sup>1</sup> He being purity itself, loves nothing so much as purity. And to Him the first-fruits of all things are due, but specially those of love. The Epistles of St Jerome<sup>2</sup> will furnish you with all the advice which is necessary to you. And since your position pledges you to obedience, choose a guide under whose conduct you may be able with greater holiness to dedicate your heart and your body to His Divine Majesty.

<sup>1</sup> Virgins have a peculiar obligation to charity; for this is the virginity of the soul, as purity, integrity, and separation is of the body" (Jeremy Taylor, chap. ii. § 3).

<sup>2</sup> Extracts are printed in Migne, vol. iii. cols. 314-346—  
 (Oxf. 22) Ep. xviii. ad Eustochium T. iv. pt. iv. 27 - 49.  
 (Oxf. 130) Ep. xcvi. ad Demetriadem do. 784-794.  
 (Oxf. 107) Ep. lvii. ad Lætam do. 590-598.  
 (Oxf. 128) Ep. xcvi. ad Gaudentium do. 796-800.

# THE FOURTH PART OF THE INTRODUCTION

CONTAINING  
COUNSELS NECESSARY AGAINST THE MORE ORDINARY  
TEMPTATIONS

## CHAPTER I

*That we ought never to concern ourselves about the words  
of the Children of the World.*

AS soon as the worldly perceive that you wish to follow the devout life, they will let fly at you a thousand shafts of flattery and slander. The more malicious will impute your change to hypocrisy, bigotry, and artifice. They will say that the world has shown its unkind face to you, and that in scorn of it you are having recourse to God. Your friends will hasten to give you a world of remonstrances, most prudent and charitable in their opinion. You will fall (they will say) into some melancholy humour, you will lose credit with the world, you will make yourself unbearable, you will become old before your time, your domestic affairs will suffer, you must live in the world in the world's way, you can be sure of your salvation without so much mystery, and a thousand such trifles.

Philothea, all this is but foolish and sorry babble. These people have no care either for your health or for your affairs. "If you are of the world," says the Saviour, "the world will have what belongs to it ; but

because you are not of the world, therefore it will hate you.”<sup>1</sup> We have seen Gentlemen and Ladies passing a whole night, indeed many nights together, in playing at chess and at cards. Is there an occupation more sorrowful, more melancholy, more sombre than that? The worldly, nevertheless, do not say a word; friends do not take any trouble about it. And yet, for an hour’s meditation, or for having seen us get up a little earlier than usual in the morning to prepare for Communion, everyone runs to the physician that he may cure us of hypochondriac humour and the jaundice. We spend thirty nights dancing, and no one complains of it; and yet for the watching of one Christmas night,<sup>2</sup> everyone coughs and complains of his stomach the day following. Who does not see that the world is an unjust judge, gracious and favourable on behalf of its own children, but rough and rigorous to the children of God?

We shall not know how to be well with the world without losing ourselves with it. It is impossible for us to satisfy it, for it is too capricious: “John is come,” says the Saviour, “neither eating nor drinking, and you say he has a devil; the Son of Man is come eating and drinking, and you say that He is a Samaritan.”<sup>3</sup> It is true, Philothea, if we give way for

<sup>1</sup> St John xv. 19, “Si de mundo fuissetis, mundus quod suum erat diligeret: quia vero de mundo non estis, sed ego elegi vos de mundo, propterea odit vos mundus.”

<sup>2</sup> The reference is to the early Masses on Christmas morning.

<sup>3</sup> St Matt. xi. 18-19, “Venit enim Joannes neque manducans neque bibens, et dicunt: Dæmonium habet. Venit filius hominis manducans et bibens et dicunt: Ecce homo vorax, et potator vini, publicanorum et peccatorum amicus.” This is conflated with St John viii. 48: “Nonne bene dicimus nos, quia Samaritanus es tu, et dæmonium habes?”

the sake of complying with it, and laugh and play and dance with the world, it will be scandalised by it. If we do not do it, it will accuse us of hypocrisy or of melancholy. If we dress ourselves well, the world will interpret it as having some design. If we neglect our dress, it will be taken as a sign of meanness of heart; our gaiety will be named by it dissoluteness, and our mortification, sadness. When it thus looks at us with an evil eye, we can never be agreeable to it. It exaggerates our imperfections, and holds them up publicly as sins. Our venial sins it makes mortal, and turns our sins of infirmity into sins of malice. Whereas, as St Paul says, "Christ is kind," on the contrary, the world is unkind; whereas "charity thinks no evil,"<sup>1</sup> the world, on the contrary, thinks always evil; and when it cannot accuse our actions, it accuses our intentions. Whether sheep have horns or have them not, whether they are white or whether they are black, the wolf will not cease to eat them if he can.

Whatever we do, the world will always wage war against us. If we are long before our Confessor, it will ask what it is that takes us so long to say. If we are only a short time with him, it will say that we do not tell him all. It will spy out all our movements, and for a mere little word of anger, it will declare that we are insupportable. The care of our affairs will seem to it avarice, and our gentleness, simpleness. But as to the children of the world, their anger is generosity; their avarice, economy; their familiarity, honourable intercourse. Spiders always spoil the work of bees.

Let us let it alone, this blind world, Philothea. Let it cry as much as it likes, like an owl, to disturb

<sup>1</sup> 1 Cor. xiii. 4-5, "Caritas patiens est, benigna est . . . non cogitat malum."

the birds of the day. Let us be firm in our own designs, invariable in our resolutions. Perseverance will show clearly if it is certainly and altogether in good earnest that we are dedicated to God and given up to the devout life. Comets and planets are nearly equally luminous in appearance, but comets disappear in a short time because they are only like transitory fires.<sup>1</sup> Planets have a perpetual clearness. So hypocrisy and true virtue have much outward resemblance, but are easily recognised one from the other, because hypocrisy has no duration, and disperses like rising smoke. But true virtue is always firm and constant. To receive opprobrium and calumny is no small advantage to us to encourage the beginnings of our devotion, for we avoid by this means the perils of vanity and pride, which are as it were the midwives of Egypt, whom the Pharaoh of hell has commanded to kill the male children of Israel the very day of their birth.<sup>2</sup> We are crucified to the world, and the world ought to be crucified to us.<sup>3</sup> It regards us as fools ; let us regard it as mad.

## CHAPTER II

*That we ought to have Good Courage.*

LIGHT, though beautiful and desirable in our eyes, dazzles them nevertheless when they have been a long time in the dark ; and before we become familiar with the people of a country, however courteous and

<sup>1</sup> Cf. part iii. chap. i. note.

<sup>2</sup> Exod. i. 16, "Quando obstetricabitis Hebræas, et partus tempus advenerit : si masculus fuerit, interficite eum."

<sup>3</sup> Gal. vi. 14, "Mihi mundus crucifixus est, et ego mundo."

gracious they may be, we feel somewhat amazed. It may very well happen, my dear Philothea, that in this change of life many qualms may rise within us, and that the great and general farewell which we have said to the follies and silliness of the world will give us some feeling of sadness and discouragement. If this should happen, have a little patience, I bid you, for it will be nothing. It is only a little amazement which the novelty brings you. When it is passed, you will receive ten thousand consolations. It will be a trouble to you at first to leave the glory which fools and scoffers show you in your vanity. But, O God, would you really lose the eternal glory which God will indeed give you? The vain amusements and pastimes in which you have employed your past years will still present themselves to your heart, to allure it, and cause it to come back to their side. But would you indeed have the courage to renounce this eternal happiness for such deceitful follies? Believe me, if you persevere, you will not be slow to receive heart delights so delicious and agreeable that you will confess that the world has only gall in comparison with this honey, and that a single day of devotion is worth more than a thousand years of worldly life.<sup>1</sup>

But you see that the mountain of Christian perfection is extremely high. Ah! my God, you say this; how then shall I be able to climb it? Courage, Philothea! When the little bees begin to take shape, they are called nymphs, and do not know yet how to fly over the flowers, or on the mountains, or on the neighbouring hills to gather honey. But little by little, nourishing themselves with the honey which their mothers have prepared, these little nymphs take

<sup>1</sup> Ps. lxxxiii. 11, "Quia melior est dies una in atriis tuis super millia" (A. V., Ps. lxxxiv.).

wing and become strong, so that afterwards they fly to gather honey through the whole country. It is true that we are still little bees in devotion, we do not know how to climb as we would, which is nothing less than to attain the summit of Christian perfection. But if we begin to take shape by our desires and resolutions, our wings will begin to grow. We must therefore hope that one day we shall be spiritual bees, and shall fly. And meanwhile, let us live on the honey of the precepts which devout people of old have left us in so large quantity, and let us pray God that He will give us feathers like doves that not only shall we be able to fly in the time of the present life, but may also rest in the eternity of the future.<sup>1</sup>

### CHAPTER III

*Of the Nature of Temptations, and of the Difference that there is between Feeling a Temptation and Consenting to it.*

**I**MAGINE to yourself, Philothea, a young princess extremely beloved by her bridegroom, and then suppose that some wicked man sends her some infamous messenger of love to put before her his miserable design that he may spoil her and soil her marriage bed. First of all this message proposes to the princess the intention of his master. Secondly the princess agrees or disagrees with the proposition and the embassy. In the third place, either she consents or she refuses. So Satan, the world, and the flesh,<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Ps. liv. 7, "Quis dabit mihi pennas sicut columbæ, et volabo et requiescam?" (A. V., Ps. lv.).

<sup>2</sup> "Grant thy people grace to withstand the temptations

seeing a soul espoused to the Son of God, send it temptations and suggestions, and by them, 1. The sin is proposed to it; 2. The soul is pleased or displeased with the proposal; 3. It consents or it refuses.<sup>1</sup> And these are in turn the three degrees in the descent to iniquity, the temptation, the delight, and the consent.<sup>2</sup> And although these three actions do not show themselves so clearly in all kinds of sin, yet they are shown palpably in deep and grievous sins.

Though the temptation to some sin, of whatever kind it be, should last our whole life, it could not make us disagreeable to the Divine Majesty provided that it was not pleasing to us, and that we did not consent to it. The reason is that in temptation we do not act but suffer, and since we take no pleasure at all in it we are not able to have from it any kind of guilt. St Paul suffered for a long while the temptations of the flesh; and so free was he from being disagreeable to God on that account that on the contrary he was glorified by it."<sup>3</sup> The Blessed Angela of Foligny felt such cruel carnal temptations that she moves us to pity when she

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of the world, the flesh, and the devil" (English Prayer Book, Collect for Trinity xviii., 1662).

<sup>1</sup> "Suggestionem sequitur delectatio, delectationem consensus vel resistentia" (St Aug. Index. in opera). "Hæc dum exemplis demonstro paucis, advertite. Suggestitur aliquod lucrum, delectat; habet fraudem, sed magnum est lucrum; delectat, non consentis: pugnam vide; adhuc suadet, adhuc instatur, adhuc deliberatur: ergo qui pugnat, periclitatur. Vidimus pugnam, cetera videamus. Contempsit justitiam, ut fraudem faceret; victus est: contempsit lucrum, ut justitiæ serviret; vicit. In his tribus, victum doleo, pugnanti metuo, victori congaudeo" (St Aug. Enar. on Ps. cxliii. 1; t. iv. p. 1602).

<sup>2</sup> Suggestio, delectatio, consensus.

<sup>3</sup> "2 Cor. xii. 7, 9, "Datus est mihi stimulus carnis meæ angelus Satanæ, qui me colaphizet. . . . Virtus in infirmitate perficitur."

tells of them.<sup>1</sup> Great also were the temptations which St Francis and St Benedict suffered, when one threw himself amongst the thorns<sup>2</sup> and the other in the snow to alleviate them<sup>3</sup>; and yet for all that they lost nothing of the grace of God, but increased it the more.

We must then be very courageous, Philothea, in the midst of temptations, and never consider ourselves as conquered as long as they displease us; being very observant of this difference between feeling and consent, that we may feel them though they displease us, but we cannot consent without their pleasing us, since pleasure, as a rule, serves as a step on the way to consent. Let, then, the enemies of our salvation put before us as much as they wish their allurements and baits; let them stop always at the door of our heart, ready to enter in; let them make as many propositions as they wish. But as long as we have resolution not to please ourselves in all this, it is in no way possible for us to offend God any more than the prince, the bridegroom of the princess, whom I have shown to you, can take in a wrong sense the message which was sent her if she had had no kind of pleasure in it. There is, however, this difference between the soul and the princess in this matter, that the princess, having heard the immodest proposition, can, if she pleases, drive away the messenger and hear him no more; but it is not always in the

<sup>1</sup> "Vix enim credo quod scribi possent passiones et infirmitates mei corporis" (Vita Arnaldi, chap. ii.).

<sup>2</sup> "Tunc subito superna gratia respectus, ad semetipsum reversus est atque urticarum et veprium juxta densa succrescere fruteta conspiciens, excitus indumento, nudum se in illis spinarum aculeis et urticarum incendiis projecit" (St Greg. Vit. S. Ben., c. i.).

<sup>3</sup> "Quapropter circa conversionis suæ primordia, tempore hiemale, in foveam glacie plenam seipsum plerumque mergebat" (St Bonav. Vit. S. Fr. c. v.).

power of the soul not to feel temptation, though it may always be in its power not to consent to it. This is why, though temptation lasts and perseveres a long while, it cannot hurt us whilst it is disagreeable to us.

But as to the delight which can follow the temptation, inasmuch as we have two parts in our soul, the one inferior, the other superior,<sup>1</sup> and as the inferior does not always follow the superior, but acts apart for itself, it frequently happens that the inferior part finds pleasure in the temptation without the consent, even against the will of the superior. It is the dispute and the war which the Apostle St Paul describes when he says that the flesh lusts against the spirit, that there is a law of the members and a law of the spirit, and such like things.<sup>2</sup>

Have you never seen, Philothea, a great wood fire covered with ashes? When you come ten or twelve hours afterwards to look for the fire, you only find a little in the midst of the hearth, and indeed have trouble to find that. Yet there it is, for you find it there; and with it you can relight the rest of the charcoal which has gone out. It is the same with charity, which is our spiritual life amid great and violent temptations. For temptation, throwing its delights into the lower parts, covers the whole soul as it seems with ashes, and reduces the love of God to the last spark. For it no longer appears in any part but the middle of the heart, at the very bottom of the spirit. Indeed it almost seems as if it was not there, and there is great difficulty in finding it. Yet it is

<sup>1</sup> "Il y a dans l'homme deux volontés, l'une supérieure, l'autre inférieure" ("Combat Spirituel," chap. xii.).

<sup>2</sup> Gal. v. 17, "Caro enim concupiscit adversus spiritum: Spiritus autem adversus carnem: hæc enim sibi invicem adversantur." Rom. vii. 22, 23, "Condelector enim legi Dei secundum interiorem hominem; video autem aliam legem in membris meis, repugnantem legi mentis meæ."

there indeed, since, though everything be in trouble in our soul and in our body, we have the resolution to consent in no way to sin, nor to temptation, and the delight which pleases our outward man is displeasing to the inward man. And though it be all about our will, yet it is not in it; and in this we see that such delight is involuntary, and being so is not sin.

#### CHAPTER IV

##### *Two Good Examples on this Subject.*

[T] is so important to you to understand this matter thoroughly that I have no hesitation in expanding my explanation of it. Ought not the young man of whom St Jerome speaks, who, when laid on a soft bed and fastened most delicately with scarves of silk, was provoked by all kinds of filthy actions and allurements by a shameless woman who lay with him that she might shake his constancy, ought he not to have felt himself in a strange position? Ought not his senses to have been seized with delight and his imagination to have been altogether occupied with this presence of voluptuous objects? Without doubt, and yet amid so many troubles, in the midst of so terrible a storm of temptation, among so many pleasures all around him, his heart was in no way conquered, nor did his will in any way consent. And when his spirit saw everything in rebellion against it, and no part of the body under its control but the tongue, he bit it off with his teeth, and spit it into the face of the filthy creature who was tormenting his own soul more cruelly by pleasure than the executioner could have ever done by torments. So the tyrant who was doubtful whether

he could conquer him by pains thought to overcome him by pleasures.<sup>1</sup>

The story of the struggle of St Catherine of Sienna in a similar case is also most wonderful. Here it is in brief. The evil spirit was permitted by God to assail the chastity of this holy virgin, with the greatest fury that he could, provided that he did not touch her at all. He made, therefore, all kinds of shameless suggestions to her heart. And to influence her so much the more, coming with his companions in the form of men and women, he did thousands upon thousands of carnal and wanton acts in her sight, adding words and offers of most immodest character. And though all these things were outward, yet by means of the senses they penetrated far into the heart of the virgin, and this, as she confessed herself, was quite full of them, nothing else remaining to her but the higher will in its fine purity, which was not stirred amid the tempest of filthiness and carnal delights. And this lasted for a very long time, until one day our Lord appeared to her, and she said to him: "Where wert Thou, my dearest Lord, when my heart was full of darkness and filth?" And to this He replied: "I was within thy heart, my daughter." "And how," she replied, "couldst Thou dwell within my heart when there was so much filthiness in it? Dost Thou, then, dwell in places so immodest?" And our Lord said to her: "Tell me, did these foul thoughts of thy heart give thee pleasure or sadness, bitterness or delight?" And she said to Him: "Extreme bitterness and sadness." And He replied

<sup>1</sup> "Tandem cœlitus inspiratus, præcisam morsibus linguam in osculantis se faciem expsuit, ac sic libidinis sensum succedens doloris magnitudo superavit" (St Jer. Vit. S. Pauli Erem., t. iv. part ii. 69).

to her : "Who was it that put this great bitterness and sadness into thy heart, but Myself, who dwelt hidden in the midst of thy soul? Believe Me, my daughter, that if I had not been present, these thoughts, which were about thy will and yet could not break it, would without doubt have overcome it and entered in, would indeed have been received with pleasure by thy freewill, and thus would have brought death to thy soul. But because I was within, I placed this displeasure and this resistance in thy heart, by which it shunned the temptation as much as it could. And not being able to do so as much as it wished, it felt a very great displeasure against it and against itself. And thus these pains were a great merit and a great gain to you, and a great increase of thy virtue and thy strength."<sup>1</sup>

Do you not see, Philothea, that this fire was covered by the ash, and that the temptation and delight had even entered within the heart, and had surrounded the will ; and that assisted by its Saviour alone the will resisted by means of the bitterness, the displeasure, and the detestation of the evil which was suggested to it, and continued to refuse its consent to the sin which surrounded it? O God, what distress to a soul who loves God, not even to know if He is in it or not ! Or if the divine love for which it is fighting is altogether extinguished or not ! But it is the fine flower of the perfection of heavenly love, to make the lover suffer and fight for the love without knowing if he has the love for which and by which he fights.

<sup>1</sup> "Et ubi, Domine mi, fuisti, dum cor meum tot turpitudinibus vexaretur? Cui Dominus: Ego fui in corde tuo" ("Vita Raymundi Confessoris," part i. chap. vii.).

## CHAPTER V

*Encouragement to the Soul which is in Temptation.*

PHILOTHEA, these great assaults and these mighty temptations are never permitted by God except against souls which He wishes to raise to His pure and transcending love. But it does not follow that after this they are assured of obtaining it. For it has often happened that those who have been constant in such violent attacks, failing to correspond afterwards with divine favours, have been found vanquished in quite small temptations. And I say this, that if you should ever happen to be afflicted with such great temptations you may know that God honours you with an extraordinary favour, and declares that He wishes to advance you before His face; and yet He wishes that you may be always humble and fearful, not assuring yourself of being able to conquer the smallest temptations after you have overcome the great, except by a continued faithfulness in regard to His Majesty.

Whatever the temptations, therefore, which come upon you may be, and whatever the delight which follows, as long as you will refuse your consent, not only to the temptation, but also to the delight, do not trouble yourself at all, for God is not at all offended by it. When a man is in a swoon and gives no longer any evidence of life, we put our hand on the heart, and however small the movement we feel there, we judge that he is alive, and that by means of some cordial and some local treatment we shall be able to restore to him strength and feeling. So it happens sometimes that by the violence of temptations our soul seems to have fallen into a total failure of its strength, and that, being as it were in a swoon, it has no longer either spiritual

life or movement. But if we wish to know if this is so, let us put our hand on the heart. Let us look if the heart and the will have still their spiritual movement, that is to say, if they do their duty in refusing to consent and follow the temptation and delight. For as long as the motion of refusal is within our heart, we are assured that charity, the life of our soul, is in us, and that Jesus Christ our Saviour is present within our soul, though hidden and covered. So that by means of the continual practice of prayer, of the Sacraments, and of trust in God, our strength will return to us, and we shall live a full and delightful life.

## CHAPTER VI

### *How Temptation and Delight may be Sin.*

THE princess<sup>1</sup> of whom we have spoken cannot help the immodest addresses which are made to her, since, as we have presupposed, they happen against her will. But if, on the contrary, she had by her charms given occasion to these addresses, having wished to give her love to him who courted her, without doubt she would be guilty of the addresses themselves. And although she might be jealous about it, she would not fail to merit blame and punishment for it. Thus it happens sometimes that the temptation alone places us in sin because we have been the cause of it.<sup>2</sup> For instance, I know that when I am playing I give way willingly to rage and blasphemy, and that play serves as a temptation to it. I sin I know as

<sup>1</sup> Cf. chap. iii.

<sup>2</sup> "Every temptation is then certainly to be reckoned as a sin when it is procured by our own act" (Jeremy Taylor, "Ductor Dubitantium," book ii. chap. iii. 7).

often as I play, and am guilty of all the temptations which happen to me in play. In the same way, if I know that some intercourse brings me into temptation and ruin, and I go into it voluntarily, I am without hesitation guilty of all the temptations which I receive in it.

When the delight which comes with the temptation can be avoided, it is always sin to receive it according as the pleasure we take in it, and the consent we give to it, is great or small, of longer or of shorter duration. It is always a matter of blame in the young Princess of whom we have spoken, if not only she listens to the foul and immodest proposal which is made to her, but also after having heard it, she takes pleasure in it, entertaining her heart on the subject with satisfaction.<sup>1</sup> For although she may not wish to consent to the actual execution of that which is proposed to her, yet she consents to give her heart spiritually to it, by the satisfaction which she takes in it. And it is always an immodest thing to apply either the heart or the body to an immodest thing; indeed, immodesty consists so much of the application of the heart that without it the application of the body cannot be sin.

When, then, you are tempted by some sin, look if you have voluntarily given occasion for being tempted. And in that case the temptation itself places you in a state of sin, by reason of the danger into which you have thrown yourself. And this is so also if you could conveniently have avoided the occasion, and if you might have foreseen, or ought to have foreseen,

<sup>1</sup> "It is not lawful to delight in an evil action (after the discovery of our error) which we did innocently in an erroneous conscience" (Jeremy Taylor, "Ductor Dubitantium," book i. chap. iii. 5).

the coming of the temptation. But if you have not given any occasion for the temptation, it cannot in any wise be imputed to you as sin.

When the delight which follows the temptation could have been avoided, and yet we have not avoided it, there is always some sort of sin according as we have dwelt on it little or much, and according to the cause of the pleasure which we have taken in it. A woman who, though she has never given occasion to be courted, yet takes pleasure in it, is not the less worthy of blame if the pleasure that she takes in it has no other cause than the courting. For example, if the gallant who wishes to give her his love plays most exquisitely on the lute, and she takes pleasure in it, not in the addresses which are offered of his love, but in the harmony and sweetness of his playing on the lute, she would have no sin, although she ought not to continue long in this pleasure for fear of passing from it to the delight of his addresses. In the same way, if some one proposes to me some scheme full of ingenuity and cunning that I may take vengeance on my enemy, and I take no pleasure nor give any consent to the vengeance which is proposed to me, but only to the subtilty of the invention of the artifice, without doubt I do not sin, although it may not be expedient that I should interest myself much in this pleasure, for fear that little by little it might bring me to take some delight in the vengeance itself.

We are sometimes surprised by those sensations of delight which follow immediately upon the temptation before we are well aware of it. And this can only at the most be a very light venial sin, but it becomes greater if, after we have taken knowledge of the evil we are in, we stay some time bargaining with the pleasure whether we ought to accept it or refuse it. And

still greater will it become if, when we are aware of it, we dwell on it some time in real indifference, without any kind of resolution to reject it. But when voluntarily and with deliberate purpose we are resolved to please ourselves with such delights, this deliberate purpose itself is a great sin, if the object in which we take delight is notably bad. It is a great vice in a woman to wish to entertain evil lovers, though she may not wish ever to give herself actually away to the lovers.

## CHAPTER VII

### *Remedies against Great Temptations.*

AS soon as you feel within yourself any temptations, do like the little children when they see a wolf or a bear in the fields. For at once they run into the arms of their father or their mother, or at least cry out for their aid and help. Run in the same way to God, calling upon His mercy and His help. It is the remedy which our Saviour recommends, "Pray that you enter not into temptation."<sup>1</sup>

If you see that the temptation nevertheless continues, or that it increases, run in spirit to embrace the holy Cross, as if you saw Jesus Christ crucified before you. Protest that you will never consent to the temptation, and ask His help against it, and continue always to protest that you do not at all wish to consent as long as the temptation lasts.

But in making these protestations and these refusals to consent, do not look into the face of the temptation,

<sup>1</sup> St Matt. xxvi. 41, "Vigilate, et orate ut non intreris in tentationem."

but only look at our Lord. For if you look at the temptation, specially when it is strong, it might shake your courage.<sup>1</sup>

Turn away your spirit by some good and praiseworthy occupations; for these occupations, when they enter into your heart and take their place there, will drive away the temptations and malign suggestions.

The great remedy against all temptations, great and small, is to unfold the heart, and to communicate the suggestions, the feelings, and affections which we have to our Director. For note that the first condition which the Evil One makes with the soul that he wishes to seduce is silence, as those do who wish to seduce women and girls, who first of all forbid them to communicate the proposals to their fathers or their husbands. God, on the other hand, in His inspirations requires above all things that we should make them known to our superiors and conductors.

But if after all this the temptation is obstinate in troubling us and persecuting us, we have nothing to do but to be obstinate on our part in our protestations that we will not consent to it. For as women cannot be married as long as they say no, so the soul, though it be troubled, can never be injured as long as it says no.

Do not dispute with your enemy at all, and do not

<sup>1</sup> "Comme c'est aux grandes tentations que nous connaissons la grandeur de notre courage, et celle de notre fidélité envers Dieu, c'est en ces occasions que nous faisons progrès en la vaillance du cœur, et que nous apprenons à manier les armes de notre milice, qui sont spirituelles, contre les milices spirituelles de nos ennemis invisibles. C'est lors, que notre âme, toute couverte de la grâce, leur paraît terrible, comme une armée rangée en belle ordonnance, et comme les bataillons du Seigneur" ("L'Esprit," part ii. § xxvi.).

answer him a single word, except that which our Lord answered him, by which also he was confounded: "Get thee behind Me, Satan; thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve."<sup>1</sup> And as the chaste woman ought not to answer a single word, nor look in the face of the foul follower who proposes to her some immodesty, but leaving him at once ought at the same instant to turn her heart to the side of her husband, and renew the oath of faithfulness which she had given to him, without troubling to make many words about it, so the devout soul, seeing itself assailed by some temptation, ought not to trouble at all to dispute or answer, but quite simply return to the side of her Bridegroom Jesus Christ, and protest to him again her faithfulness and her wish to be always only His.<sup>2</sup>

## CHAPTER VIII

### *That we must resist Small Temptations.*

THOUGH we are to struggle with great temptations with invincible courage, and the victory we have over them be extremely useful to us, yet nevertheless at times we derive more profit from struggling boldly against the small; for as the great surpass the small ones in quality, so the small ones surpass them so immeasurably in number that the victory over them may be comparable to that over the greater. Wolves

<sup>1</sup> St Matt. iv. 10, "Vade satana: Scriptum est enim; Dominum Deum, Deum tuum adorabis, et illi soli servies."

<sup>2</sup> "Comme entre les arbres il n'y a point de poirier de bon chrétien qui ne soit enté; entre les hommes, même les plus pieux, il n'y a point de bon chrétien qui ne soit tenté" ("L'Esprit," part ii. § xxvi.).

and bears are without doubt more dangerous than flies, yet they do not give us so much provocation and annoyance, nor do they exercise our patience so much. It is a very easy thing to keep ourselves back from murder, but it is a difficult matter to avoid the small outbursts of temper for which occasions offer themselves at every moment. It is a very easy thing for a man or for a woman to keep themselves free of adultery, but it is not so easy a thing to hold themselves back from casting glances on others, from giving and receiving love, from procuring graces and small favours, from saying and receiving words of flattery. It is very easy not to admit a rival with your husband or with your wife as far as concerns the body, but it is not so easy to do so as regards the heart; very easy not to defile the marriage bed, but very hard not to disturb the marriage love; very easy not to steal the property of another, but hard not to aim at and covet it; very easy not to bear false witness in the court, but hard not to lie in intercourse with others; very easy not to be drunk, but hard to be sober; very easy not to desire another's death, but hard not to desire his discomfiture; very easy not to defame him, but hard not to despise him. In short, these small temptations to anger, suspicion, jealousy, envy, wanton love, frolicking, vanity, duplicity, affectation, cunning, immodest thoughts, are the continual exercise of those very people who are the most devout and resolute. This is why, Philothea, we must with great care and diligence prepare ourselves for this combat; and be assured that the more victories you gain against these little enemies, the more precious stones will be set in the crown of glory which God is preparing for us in His Paradise. This is why I say that, whilst waiting to attack boldly and valiantly the great temptations if

they come, we must boldly and diligently defend ourselves from these small and feeble attacks.

## CHAPTER IX

### *How we must Remedy the Small Temptations.*

NOW, indeed, as to these small temptations of vanity, of suspicion, of worry, of jealousy, of envy, of wanton love, and such-like trickery which come and pass before our eyes like flies and gnats, and sometimes bite us on the cheek, sometimes on the nose—since it is impossible to be altogether free from their importunity, the best resistance we can make against them is to be in no way worried by them. For all this can do no harm, though it may give us much annoyance, provided that we are thoroughly resolved to serve God.

Despise, therefore, these small attacks, and do not ever deign to think over what they wish to say, but let them pass around your ears as much as they wish, and run to and fro about you as flies do. And when they wish to bite you and you see them indeed stop in your heart, do nothing else but quite simply put them away; not indeed struggling against them, nor replying to them, but doing some action contrary to them, whatever they are, especially acts of the love of God.<sup>1</sup> For if you will believe me, you will not obstinately wish to set the contrary virtue against the temptation that you feel, because that would be as if you wished

<sup>1</sup> “Le deuxième est de ne combattre pas cette tentation par des actes contraires de l’entendement, mais par ceux de la volonté élançant mille protestations de fidélité aux vérités que Dieu nous révèle par son Eglise” (“L’Esprit,” art xv. § xii.)

to dispute with it ; but if you have done an action of this virtue directly contrary to it, if you have had the leisure to recognise the quality of the temptation, you will simply turn your heart to the side of Jesus Christ crucified, and by an act of love in regard to Him, you will kiss His sacred feet. This is the best means of conquering the enemy, in small as in great temptations. For the love of God, containing in itself all the perfections of all the virtues, even more excellently than the virtues themselves, is thus a more sovereign remedy against all vices, and your spirit, accustoming itself in all temptations to have recourse to this general meeting-place, will not need to look and examine what temptation it has, but simply feeling itself troubled, it will quiet itself in this great remedy, which beyond this is so terrifying to the evil spirit that when he sees that his temptations provoke us to this divine love, he ceases to have anything to do with us.

So much for small and frequent temptations ; and he who would wish to notice them more in detail would waste his time and gain no advantage from it.

## CHAPTER X

*How we ought to strengthen our Heart against Temptations.*

CONSIDER from time to time what passions rule most in your soul. And having discovered them, adopt a plan of life such as may be quite contrary to them in thought, in word, or in deed. For instance, if you feel yourself disposed to the passion of vanity, direct your thoughts frequently to the misery of this human life, how much annoyance this vanity

will be to our conscience in the hour of death, how unworthy of a generous heart, how it is nothing but the folly and pleasure of small children, and so on. Speak often against vanity; and although it may seem against the grain, do not cease to despise it, for by this means you will enlist yourself honourably on the opposite side. And by dint of speaking against anything, we stir ourselves up to hate it, although at the beginning we held it in affection. Do works which are mean and humble as much as you can, though you may seem to do them grudgingly, for by this means you habituate yourself to humility and weaken your vanity, so that when temptation comes, your inclination will not show it so much favour, and you will have more strength to fight against it.<sup>1</sup> If you are inclined to avarice, think often of the folly of this sin, which makes us slaves of that which was created only to serve us, that at death in any case you must give it up and leave it in the hands of some one who will dissipate it, or to whom it will serve for ruin and damnation, and other thoughts of the same kind. Speak out boldly against avarice, praise heartily the contempt of the world, force yourself to practise frequently almsgiving and charity, and to allow occasions of saving to slip away.

If you are a person willing to give or receive love, think often how dangerous this occupation is, both for you and for others; how unworthy a thing it is to profane and use as a pastime the most noble affection which is in our soul; how it is subject to the reproach

<sup>1</sup> "Enfin, si levant les yeux au Ciel vous envisagez la Souveraine Majesté de Dieu qui mérite des services infinis, vous verrez alors clairement que toutes vos bonnes œuvres sont pour vous un sujet de crainte plutôt que de vanité" ("Combat Spirituel," chap. xxxii.).

of an utter levity of spirit. Speak often in favour of purity and simplicity of heart, and practise also as much as is possible to you acts suitable to this, avoiding all affectation and trifling.

In a word, in times of peace—that is to say, when the temptation to the sin which besets you does not press upon you—be rigorous in the acts of the contrary virtue, and if opportunity for doing them does not present itself, seek to meet with them. For by this means you will strengthen your heart against future temptation.

## CHAPTER XI

### *Of Disquietude.*

DISQUIETUDE<sup>1</sup> is not a simple temptation, but a source from which and through which many temptations come. I will therefore say something about it. Sadness is nothing else but anguish of spirit which we have from evil which is in us against our will, whether the evil be outward, as poverty, sickness, contempt; whether it be inward, as ignorance, dryness, repugnance, temptation. When, then, the soul feels it has some evil, it is displeased with having it, and then comes the sadness; and at once it desires to be quit of it and to have the means of throwing it off. And so far it is right, for naturally every one desires what is good, and flees from what he thinks is bad.

<sup>1</sup> “Sçachez au reste que toute inquiétude lui déplaît; parce que de quelque nature qu’elle soit, elle n’est jamais sans quelque défaut, et vient toujours d’un mauvais principe qui est l’amour propre. Tâchez donc de prévoir de loin ce qui peut vous inquiéter, et préparez-vous de bonne heure à le supporter avec patience” (“Combat Spirituel,” chap. xxv.).

If the soul seeks means of being delivered from its evil for the love of God, it will seek it with patience, gentleness, humility, and calmness, awaiting its deliverance more from the goodness and providence of God than from its own trouble, industry, or diligence. If it seeks its deliverance for self-love, it will be worried and heated in the search for means, as if what is good depended more on itself than on God. I do not say that I think so; but I say that it worries itself as if it thought so.

But if it does not at once meet with what it desires, it gives way to great anxiety and impatience; and since these do not take away the preceding evil but rather make it worse, the soul falls into immoderate anguish and distress, with a failure of courage and force, as if it seemed that the evil had no longer any remedy. You see, then, that the sadness which at the beginning is just, gives birth to disquietude, and disquietude gives birth afterwards to an increase of sadness which is extremely dangerous.

Disquietude is the greatest evil which happens to the soul except sin. For as the seditious and internal troubles of a State ruin it entirely and prevent it from being able to resist the foreigner, so our heart, being troubled and disquieted in itself, loses not only the force to maintain the virtues it has acquired, but more than this, even the means of resisting the temptations of the enemy, who thereupon makes all sorts of efforts to fish, as is said, in troubled waters.

Disquietude arises from an immoderate desire to be freed from an evil which we feel, or to gain the good which we hope for. And yet there is nothing which makes the evil worse and which removes the good to a greater distance than disquietude and worry. Birds are caught in nets and snares because when they find

themselves entrapped they struggle and move immoderately to escape from it, and in doing so they entangle themselves so much the more. When, then, you are pressed with the desire of being freed from some evil, or of attaining some good, before all things place your spirit in a state of repose and tranquillity, calm your judgment and your will.<sup>1</sup> And then, quite softly and gently, pursue the end of your desire, taking in order the means which will be suitable. And when I say quite softly, I do not wish to say negligently, but without worry, trouble, and disquietude. Otherwise, in place of giving effect to your desire, you will spoil everything, and will embarrass yourself very greatly.

“My soul is always in my hands, O Lord, and I have not forgotten Thy law,” said David.<sup>2</sup> Examine more than once a day, but at least in the evening and the morning, whether you have your soul in your hands, or whether some passion and disquietude has not altogether turned it away. Consider if you have your heart at your command, or indeed if it has not escaped from your hands to engage itself in some inordinate affection of love, hatred, envy, covetousness, fear, worry, and joy. But if it has strayed, before all things search for it, and lead it back softly into the presence of God, replacing your affections and desires under the obedience and conduct of His divine will. For as those who fear to lose anything which is precious to them hold it firmly shut up in their hand,

<sup>1</sup> “Il faut à la vérité que nous concevions de la douleur de nos fautes; mais cette douleur doit être tranquille et modérée, comme je l’ai dit plusieurs fois” (“Combat Spirituel,” chap. xxv.).

<sup>2</sup> Ps. cxviii. 109, “Anima mea in manibus meis semper: et legem tuam non sum oblitus” (A.V., Ps. cxix.).

so in imitation of this great king, we ought always to say : " O my God, my soul is in danger ; this is why I bear it always in my hands, and in this way I have not forgotten Thy law."

Do not permit your desires, however small they may be and of little importance, to disquiet you, for after the little ones, the great and more important desires will find your heart more disposed to trouble and disorder. When you feel disquietude coming, commend yourself to God, and resolve to do nothing at all of that which your desire requires of you until the disquietude has totally passed away, unless it be something which cannot be put off, and then you must, by a gentle and tranquil effort, get hold again of the current of your desire, tempering it and moderating it as far as possible ; and then you must do what has to be done not according to your desire but in accordance with your reason.

If you can unfold your disquietude to him who directs your soul, or at least to some intimate and devout friend, do not doubt but that you will at once be set at rest. For the communication of the sorrows of the heart has the same effect on the soul that bleeding has on the body of a person who is suffering from prolonged fever. It is the remedy of remedies. So the King St Louis gave this counsel to his son : " If thou hast any discomfort in thy heart, tell it at once to thy confessor, or to some good person, and you will be able to bear your trouble lightly by the comfort that he will give you." <sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Cf. part i, chap. iv. note.

## CHAPTER XII

*Of Sadness.*

“THE sadness which is according to God,” says St Paul, “worketh repentance unto salvation ; the sadness of the world worketh death.”<sup>1</sup> Sadness, then, can be good or evil according to the different results it may work in us. It is true that it works more evil than good ; for it only produces two good results, that is, mercy and repentance. And there are six which are evil, that is, anguish, idleness, indignation, jealousy, envy, and impatience. And this has led the wise man to say : “ Sadness kills many, and there is no profit in it at all ” ;<sup>2</sup> because for the two good streams which flow from the fountain of sadness, there are six which are very bad.

The enemy makes use of sadness to exercise his temptations in regard to that which is good. For as he tries to make the evil rejoice in their sins, so he tries to sadden the good in their good works. For as he cannot procure evil but in making it look well, so he cannot divert from that which is good but by making it look disagreeable. The evil one is pleased with sadness and melancholy, because he is sad and melancholy, and will be so eternally. And so he would wish that each should be as he is.

Sadness, which is evil, troubles the soul, places it in disquietude, gives immoderate fears, makes prayer distasteful, deadens and oppresses the brain, deprives the

<sup>1</sup> 2 Cor. vii. 10, “ Quæ enim secundum Deum tristitia est, pœnitentiam in salutem stabilem operatur : sæculi autem tristitia mortem operatur.”

<sup>2</sup> Eccclus. xxx. 25, “ Multos enim occidit tristitia, et non est utilitas in illa.”

soul of counsel, of resolution, of judgment, and of courage, and breaks down its forces. In short, it is like a hard winter which cuts down all the beauty of the earth, and benumbs all the animals. For it takes away all sweetness from the soul, and makes it nearly impotent and powerless in all its faculties.<sup>1</sup>

If ever it happens to you, Philothea, to be attacked by this evil sadness, practise the following remedies. "Is any one sad," says St James, "let him pray."<sup>2</sup> Prayer is a sovereign remedy, for it lifts up the soul to God, who is our only joy and consolation. But when praying, make use of affections and words, whether inward or outward, which tend to the confidence and love of God, such as: "O God of mercy, O God of infinite goodness, my precious Saviour, O God of my heart, my joy, my hope, my dear Bridegroom, the Well-beloved of my soul," and so forth.<sup>3</sup>

Resist vigorously the inclination of sadness, and though it seems that all which you do at this time will be done coldly, sadly, and sluggishly, yet do not give up doing it.<sup>4</sup> For the enemy who aims at making us

<sup>1</sup> "Demeurez fort en paix, et repaissez votre cœur de la suavité de l'amour céleste, sans lequel nos cœurs sont sans vie, et notre vie sans bonheur. Ne vous relâchez nullement à la tristesse ennemie de la dévotion. De quoi se doit attrister une fille servante de celui qui sera à jamais notre joie? Rien que le péché ne nous doit déplaire et fâcher; et au bout de ce déplaisir du péché, encore faut-il que la joie et consolation sainte y soit attachée" ("L'Esprit," part xviii. § 4).

<sup>2</sup> St Jas. v. 13, "Tristatur aliquis vestrum? oret."

<sup>3</sup> Pss. Cant. passim.

<sup>4</sup> "Doe not seek for deliciousness and sensible consolations in the actions of religion, but only regard the duty and the conscience of it." . . . "And as we must not judge our devotion to be barren or unfruitful when we want the over-

weary of good works by sadness, when he sees that we do not give up doing them, and that being done with resistance they are done better, he ceases to trouble us further.

Sing spiritual songs,<sup>1</sup> for the evil one has often ceased his operations by this means, witness the spirit which assaulted or possessed Saul, the violence of which was repressed by psalmody.<sup>2</sup>

It is a good thing to be employed with outward works, and to change them as much as we can, to turn away the soul from the object of sadness, to purify and warm the spirit, sadness being a passion of cold and dry complexion.<sup>3</sup>

Perform outward acts of fervour, although it may be without relish, embracing the image of the crucifix, holding it to your breast, kissing the feet and the hands, raising your eyes and your hands to heaven, lifting up your voice to God by words of love and confidence, such as these: "My Well-beloved is mine, and I am His! My Well-beloved is to me a nosegay of myrrh, He will dwell between my breasts."<sup>4</sup> My

flowings of joy running over: so neither must we cease for want of them" (Jeremy Taylor, "Holy Living" chap. iv. § 7).

<sup>1</sup> "Possibly we may be pleased to recite a hymn, when a collect seems flat to us and unpleasant" (Jeremy Taylor, "Holy Living," chap. iv. § 7).

<sup>2</sup> 1 Kings. (1 Sam.) xviii. 10, "Post diem autem alteram, invasit spiritus Dei malus Saul, et prophetabat in medio domus suæ: David autem psallabat manu sua, sicut per singulos dies."

<sup>3</sup> "Let all the Intervals or void spaces of time be employed in prayers, reading, meditating, works of nature, recreation, charity, friendliness, and neighbourhood, and means of spiritual and corporal health" (Jeremy Taylor, "Holy Living," chap. i. § 1.).

<sup>4</sup> Cant. ii. 16, i. 12, "Dilectus meus mihi, et ego illi." "Fasciculus myrrhæ dilectus meus mihi, inter ubera mea commorabitur."

eyes look unto Thee, O my God, saying, When wilt Thou comfort me? O Jesus, be Thou Jesus to me! Glory be to Jesus! And my soul shall live.<sup>1</sup> Who will separate me from the love of God?"<sup>2</sup> and such like.

Moderate discipline is good against sadness, because this voluntary outward affliction obtains inward consolation, and the soul feeling the pains from without turns from those which are within.<sup>3</sup> The frequent use of the Holy Communion is excellent, for this heavenly bread strengthens the heart and rejoices the spirit.<sup>4</sup>

Unfold all the feelings, affections, and suggestions which come from your sadness to your conductor and confessor, humbly and faithfully. Seek the company of spiritual persons, and be with them as much as you can during these times. And last of all, resign yourselves into the hands of God, preparing yourself to suffer this vexatious sadness practically as a just punishment for your vain joys. And have no doubt at all that God, after having proved you, will deliver you from this evil.

<sup>1</sup> Pss. cxviii. 82, xxi. 31, "Defecerunt oculi mei in eloquium tuum dicentes: Quando consolaberis me." "Et anima mea illi vivet" (A.V., Pss. cxix., xxii.).

<sup>2</sup> Rom. viii. 35: "Quis ergo nos separabit a charitate Christi."

<sup>3</sup> "Son sentiment était que la mortification sans l'oraison, était un corps sans âme; et l'oraison sans mortification, une âme sans corps. Il ne voulait pas que jamais ces deux choses se séparassent." . . . "Le lis et la rose de l'oraison et de la contemplation, ne se conservent et nourrissent bien que parmi les épines des mortifications" ("Esprit," part xiii. § 14).

<sup>4</sup> "The strengthening and refreshing of our souls by the Body and the Blood of Christ" (Eng. Ch. Catechism, 1603).

CHAPTER XIII

*Of Spiritual and Sensible Consolations, and how we must behave ourselves in them.*

GOD orders this great world by the law of perpetual change, by which day is always changing into night, spring into summer, summer into autumn, autumn into winter, and winter into spring. And one day never perfectly resembles another. There are some which are cloudy, some rainy, some dry, some windy—a variety which gives great beauty to this universe. It is the same with man, who is, according to the saying of the ancients, an abridgement of the world;<sup>1</sup> for he is never in the same state; and his life flows on this earth like the waters which ebb and flow with a perpetual change of movement. He sometimes raises it in hope, sometimes abases it by fear, sometimes bends it to the right by consolation, sometimes to the left by affliction. And never is there a single number of his days, nor even one of his hours entirely like another.

And this is a great warning to us. We must try and have a continual and inviolable equanimity in so great an inequality of accidents. And though all things change and vary largely around us, we must remain constantly immovable and always look to, aim at, and aspire to our God. Let the ship take what route it will. Let it sail to the West or the East, to the South or the North, and let whatever wind there be drive it. Yet the needle of the compass will never look at any but its own beautiful star, the pole. Let everything turn itself topsy-turvy, I do not

<sup>1</sup> “Microcosmos” (Vit. Pyth. in Photius’s Bibl.).

say only round us but within us, that is to say, let our soul be sad, joyous, in gentleness, in bitterness, in peace, in trouble, in light, in darkness, in temptations, in repose, in taste, out of taste, in dryness, in tenderness; let the sun burn it up, or the dew refresh it. Ah! yet for ever and ever and always must the point of our heart, our spirit, our higher will, which is our compass, look steadily and aim perpetually at the love of God its Creator, its Saviour, its only sovereign good. "Whether we live, or whether we die," says the Apostle, "we are God's: who will separate us from the love and charity of God?" Never indeed will anything separate us from this love, neither tribulation, nor anguish, nor death, nor life, neither present pain, nor the fear of future accidents, nor the cunning of evil spirits, neither the height of consolations, nor the depth of afflictions, neither tenderness nor dryness, ought ever to separate us from this holy charity, which is founded in Jesus Christ.<sup>1</sup>

Such an absolute resolution never to forsake God nor quit His gentle love serves as a counterpoise to our souls to hold them in holy equanimity amid the inequality of the various movements which the condition of this life brings to them. For as the little bees when they see themselves surprised by the wind in the fields, lay hold of stones so as to be able to balance themselves in the air and not to be so easily carried at the mercy of the storm, so our soul, when it has steadfastly embraced by resolution the precious love of its God, remains constant amid the inconstancy and

<sup>1</sup> Rom. viii. 35, 38, 39; xiv. 8, "Quis ergo nos separabit a charitate Christi? Neque mors, neque vita, neque instantia, neque futura, neque fortitudo, neque altitudo, neque profundum, neque creatura alia poterit nos separare a charitate Dei, quæ est in Christo Jesu Domino nostro. Sive vivimus, sive morimur Domini sumus."

vicissitude of consolations and afflictions, both spiritual and temporal, both outward and inward.

But beyond this general teaching, we have need of some particular instructions.

1. I say, then, that devotion does not consist in the gentleness, sweetness, consolation, and sensible tenderness of the heart, which provoke us to tears and sighs, and give us a certain agreeable and savory satisfaction in some spiritual exercises. No, dear Philothea, this is not the same thing as devotion. For there are many souls who have this tenderness and consolation, who nevertheless do not cease to be very vicious, and consequently have no true love of God, and much less any true devotion. Saul persecuting poor David to death, when he was fleeing before him in the deserts of Engedi, entered all alone into a cavern in which David and his friends were concealed. David, who on this occasion could have killed him a thousand times over, gave him his life, and not only did not wish to frighten him, but having let him go at his pleasure, called out to him afterwards to show him his innocence and to let him know that he had been at his mercy. Now upon this, what did not Saul do to show that his heart was softened towards David? He called him his son, he began to cry aloud, to praise him, to acknowledge his kindness, to pray God for him, to foretell his future glory, and to commend to him those whom he would leave after him. What greater gentleness and tenderness of heart could he have shown? And for all that he had nevertheless not changed his soul,<sup>1</sup> since he continued to persecute David as cruelly as before. So there are persons

<sup>1</sup> "1 Kings (1 Sam.) xxiv. 18, "Dixitque ad David: Justior tu es quam ego: tu enim tribuisti mihi bona; ego autem reddidi tibi mala."

who, when they think of the goodness of God and the Passion of the Saviour, feel for it tenderness of heart. They draw deep sighs, shed tears, and offer prayers and thanksgivings so full of tenderness that we should say that they had their heart possessed by a very deep devotion. But when this comes to the test, we find that, like the passing showers in a very hot summer, which fall in great drops upon the earth, but do not go into it, and only serve for the production of mushrooms, these tears and expressions of tenderness, since they fall on a vicious heart, do not enter it at all, and are altogether useless to it. For notwithstanding all this, these poor things would not give up a single farthing of property which they had gained in a wrong way, would not renounce one of their previous affections, and would not wish to suffer the least inconvenience in the world for the service of the Saviour over Whom they have wept. So that the good emotions they have had were only spiritual mushrooms. They not only are not true devotion, but very often are great ruses of the enemy. He, while interesting these souls with these small consolations, makes them rest content and satisfied with them, that they no longer seek for the true and solid devotion which consists in a constant, resolute, prompt, and active will to follow out what we know to be agreeable to God.

A child will cry lustily if he sees any one lancing his mother to let blood, but if at the same time the mother for whom he is crying asks for an apple or a packet of sugar-plums he holds in his hand, he would not on any account give it up. Such are the greater number of our tender devotions. When we see the blow of the lance which pierces the heart of Jesus Christ crucified, we weep tenderly. Alas! Philothea, it is indeed good for us to weep over this death and grievous

Passion of our Father<sup>1</sup> and Redeemer, but why do we not give Him in earnest the apple we have in our hands, and which He asks so earnestly, that is, our heart, the only apple of love which this dear Saviour requires of us? Why do we not give up to Him the many little affections, delights, kindnesses which He wishes to take from our hand, but cannot, because they are our sugar-plums of which we are more dainty than desirous of His heavenly grace? Ah! these are the friendships of little children, tender but feeble, fanciful, without effect. Devotion, then, does not consist in these tender mercies or these tender affections. These sometimes proceed from nature, which is soft and susceptible of the pleasure we wish to give it, and sometimes from the enemy, who stirs up our imagination to the perceptions which are fitting to interest us in it.

2. These tender mercies and kindly comforts are nevertheless sometimes very good and useful, for they stir up the appetite of the soul, strengthen the spirit, and adjust to the promptitude of devotion a holy faith and joy, which makes our actions beautiful and agreeable, even on the outside. It is this taste that we have for divine things of which David cried: "O Lord, how sweet are Thy words unto my lips. They are sweeter than honey unto my mouth."<sup>2</sup> And certainly the least little consolation of devotion which we receive is worth more in every way than the most excellent recreation of the world. The breasts and the milk, that is to say, the favours of the Divine Bride, are better to the soul than the choicest wines of the pleasures of the earth. He who has tasted them holds all the rest of the other consolations as gall and

<sup>1</sup> Cf. part ii. chap. xvi. n. 4, p. 134.

<sup>2</sup> Ps. cxviii. 103, "Quam dulcia faucibus meis eloquia tua, super mel ori meo." (A.V., Ps. cxix.).

wormwood. And as those who have the herb scythica<sup>1</sup> in the mouth receive from it such extreme sweetness that they do not feel either hunger or thirst, so those to whom God has given this heavenly manna of sweetness and inward consolation, cannot desire or receive the consolations of the world, in such a way at least as to have a relish for them and to interest their affections in them. They are little foretastes of the immortal sweetness which God gives to souls who seek for Him. They are sugar-plums which He gives His little children when He entices them. They are cordials which He presents to them when He comforts them. They are sometimes also pledges of His eternal rewards. It is said that Alexander the Great, when sailing on the high seas, first discovered Arabia Felix by the sense which he had of the sweet odours which the wind wafted to him, and upon that gained courage himself, and gave it to all his companions. Thus we often receive comforts and delights in this sea of mortal life, which without doubt make us realise the delight of that heavenly country to which we aim and aspire.

3. But, you will say to me, since there are tender consolations which are good and come from God, and some also which are useless, dangerous, indeed pernicious,

<sup>1</sup> "Scythia herbam quæ scythice vocatur, circa Bœotiam nascens, prædulcem alias utilissimamque ad ea quæ spasmata vocant. Magna et ea commendatio, quod in ore eam habentes famem sitimque non sentiunt." (Plin. Hist. Nat. xxv. 43).

"The juice of Licorice made according to Art, and hardened into a lumpe, which is called Succus Liquiritiæ, being holden under the toong and there suffered to melt." "The root of Licorice is good against the rough harshness of the throte and brest; it openeth the pipes of the lungs when they be stuffed or stopped, and ripeneth the cough, and bringeth forth flegm" (Gerarde, Herbal., p. 1120.)

which come either from nature or even from the enemy,<sup>1</sup> how shall I be able to discern one from the other, and to know the bad or the useless among the good?

It is a general doctrine, dearest Philothea, with regard to the affections and passions of our souls, that we ought to know them by their fruits.<sup>2</sup> The heart is good which has good affections. And the affections and passions are good which produce in us good effects and holy actions. If the comforts, tender mercies, and consolations make us more humble, patient, tractable, charitable, and sympathetic with our neighbours, more zealous in mortifying our lusts and evil inclinations, more constant in our exercises, more pliable and supple to those whom we ought to obey, more simple in our life, without doubt, Philothea, they are of God. But if these comforts only bring comfort to ourselves, and render us curious, ill-natured, punctilious, impatient, obstinate, proud, presumptuous, hard towards our neighbours, and that, thinking already that we are little saints, we no longer wish to be subject to direction or to correction, indubitably they are consolations which are false and pernicious. A good tree produces only good fruit.

4. When we have these comforts and consolations, we ought to humble ourselves much before God. Let us indeed take care not to say in respect to these comforts: "Oh, how good I am!" (1) No, Philothea, there are things that are good which do not make us better. For, as I have said, devotion does not consist in that. But let us say: "Oh, how good God is to those who

<sup>1</sup> "La dévotion sensible procède ou de la nature, ou du Démon, ou de la grâce" ("Combat Spirituel," chap. lix.).

<sup>2</sup> "On en connoîtra la cause par les effets qu'elle produira dans l'Ame" ("Combat Spirituel," chap. lix.).

hope in Him, and to the soul who seeks for Him.”<sup>1</sup> He who has sugar in his mouth cannot say that his mouth is sweet, but only that the sugar is sweet. So, although this spiritual comfort is very good, and God, who has given it us, is very good, it does not follow that he who has received it is good.<sup>2</sup> (2) Let us know that we are still little children, who have need of milk, and that these sugar-plums are given to us because we still have a tender and delicate spirit, which has need of enticements and baits to be drawn to the love of God. (3) But after that, speaking generally and as a rule, let us receive humbly these gifts and favours, and let us value them extremely high, not only because they are so in themselves, but because it is the hand of God which places them at the heart, as a mother would do when she wishes to coax her child and herself puts the sugar plums in his mouth one after the other. For if the child had spirit, he would set more value on the sweetness of the tenderness and caresses which his mother shows to him than the sweetness of the sugar-plum itself. And so it is good, Philothea, to have the sweets of comfort, but it is the sweetest of all the sweets of comfort to think that God with His loving and soothing hand places them in our mouth, at our heart, in our soul, in our mind. (4) Having received them thus humbly, let us employ them carefully according to the intention of Him who gives them to us. Why do we think that God gives us comforts? To make us gentle towards

<sup>1</sup> Lam. iii. 25, “*Bonus est Dominus sperantibus in eum, animæ quærenti illum.*”

<sup>2</sup> “Lors donc que vous vous sentez le cœur plein de joye et de consolation spirituelle, ne perdez point trop de tems à examiner quel en peut-être le principe : mais gardez-vous bien d’y mettre votre confiance, ou de vous en estimer davantage” (“*Combat Spirituel*,” chap. lix.).

others, and loving to Him. The mother gives the sugar-plum to the child that he may kiss her. Let us kiss, then, the Saviour who gives us so many sweets of comfort. Now to kiss the Saviour is to obey Him, to keep His commandments, to do His will, to follow His desires, in short, to embrace Him tenderly with obedience and faithfulness. When, then, we have received some spiritual consolation, we must that very day make ourselves more diligent in going good and in humbling ourselves. (5) We must, besides this, renounce from time to time such comforts, tender mercies, and consolations, separating our heart from them, and protesting, that though we accept them humbly and love them, because God sends them to us, and that they provoke us to His love, yet it is not these that we look for, but God, and His holy love; not the consolation, but the Consoler; not the sweetness, but the sweet Saviour; not the tender mercies, but Him who is the sweetness of heaven and of earth. And in this affection we ought to dispose ourselves to remain firm in the holy love of God, though in our life we may never have any consolation. And we should be willing to say on the mount of Calvary as on that of Tabor: "O Lord, it is good for me to be with Thee,"<sup>1</sup> whether Thou art on the Cross, or whether Thou art in glory. (6) Finally, I advise you, that if there should come any notable abundance of such consolations, tender mercies, tears, and comforts, or anything extraordinary concerning them, you should confer about them faithfully with your Conductor, so as to know how to moderate and behave yourself in regard to them. For it is written, "Hast thou found honey? Eat only what is sufficient for thee."<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> St Matt. xvii. 4, "Domine, bonum est nos hic esse."

<sup>2</sup> Prov. xxv. 16, "Mel invenisti, comede quod sufficit tibi."

## CHAPTER XIV

*Of Spiritual Dryness and Barrenness.*

YOU will do then as I have just told you, dear Philothea, when you have consolation. But this fine weather which is so agreeable will not last always. It will happen sometimes that you will be so deprived and destitute of the feeling of devotion that you will think that your soul is a desert land, fruitless, barren,<sup>1</sup> in which there is neither path nor road to find God nor any water of grace which can water it, because of the dryness which threatens to reduce it wholly to a waste. Alas ! how the soul which is in this condition is worthy of compassion. And especially when this evil is serious. For then, in imitation of David, she feeds on tears day and night, whilst by a thousand suggestions the enemy, that he may make her despair, mocks her and says to her : “ Ah ! poor thing, where is thy God ? ”<sup>2</sup> By what road will you find Him ? Who will ever trouble to give you the joy of His grace ? ” What will you do then, Philothea ? Take care from what quarter the evil comes to you. We are often ourselves the cause of our barrenness and dryness. 1. As a mother refuses sugar to her child when he is subject to worms, so God takes away His consolations from us when we take some vain pleasure in them<sup>3</sup> and when we are subject to the worms of presumption. “ It is good for me, O my God,

<sup>1</sup> Ps. lxii. 3, “ In terra deserta et invia, et inaquosa ” (A.V., Ps. lxiii.).

<sup>2</sup> Ps. xli. 4, “ Fuerunt mihi lacrymæ meæ panes die et nocte : dum dicitur mihi quotidie : ubi est Deus tuus. ”

<sup>3</sup> “ L’aridité spirituelle procède 3. de la grâce que le S. Esprit nous communique, soit, pour nous détacher de tout ce qui n’est pas Dieu, et qui ne va pas à Dieu, soit pour nous convaincre pleinement que tout ce que nous avons de bien, ne

that Thou didst humble me, for before I was humbled, I had offended Thee.”<sup>1</sup>

2. If we neglect to gather the sweetness and delights of the love of God, when it is the season for them, He removes them from us in punishment of our idleness. The Israelite who did not gather manna early in the morning could no longer do so after the sun was up, for it was all melted.<sup>2</sup> 3. We sometimes lie in a bed of sensual contentment and perishable consolations, like the sacred Bride in the Canticles.<sup>3</sup> The Bridegroom of our souls knocks at the door of our heart, he inspires us to set to work again at our spiritual exercises. But we haggle with Him, inasmuch as it is annoying to us to give up our vain interests, and to separate ourselves from this false contentment. This is why He passes on, and leaves us to stagnate. Then when we wish to seek for Him, we have much difficulty in finding Him. And we well deserve it, since we have been so faithless and disloyal to His love as to have refused to exercise it to follow that of the things of the world. Ah! You have then the flour of Egypt, but you will not have the manna of heaven. Bees hate all artificial smells.<sup>4</sup> And the sweetness of the Holy Spirit is inconsistent with the artificial delights of the world.

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peut venir que de Dieu, soit pour nous faire estimer davantage les dons du Ciel, soit pour nous unir plus étroitement avec lui en nous faisant renoncer à tout, même aux délices spirituelles.” Cf. “Combat Spirituel,” chap. lix.

<sup>1</sup> Ps. cxviii. 71, 67, “Bonum mihi quia humiliasti me: Priusquam humiliarer ego deliqui.” (A.V., Ps. cxix.).

<sup>2</sup> Exod. xvi. 21, “Colligebant autem mane singuli, quantum sufficere poterat ad vescendum; cumque incaluisset sol, liquefiebat.”

<sup>3</sup> Cant. v. 2, “Ego dormio, et cor meum vigilat: vox dilecti mei pulsantis: Aperi mihi, soror mea.”

<sup>4</sup> “Apes odere fœtos odores, proculque fugiunt, sed et fictos” (Plin. Hist. Nat. xi. 19).

4. The duplicity and ingenuity of spirit exercised in the confessions and spiritual communions which are made with our Conductor attract dryness and barrenness. For since we lie to the Holy Spirit it is not wonderful if He refuses us His consolation. You do not wish to be simple and frank as a little child; you will not have, therefore, the sugar-plums of little children.

5. You are thoroughly glutted with worldly contentment; it is not wonderful if spiritual delights are distasteful to you. Doves already glutted, says the old proverb, find cherries bitter. "He hath filled the hungry," says our Lady, "with good things, and the rich He hath sent empty away."<sup>1</sup> Those who are rich in worldly pleasures are not capable of spiritual.

6. Have you carefully preserved the fruits of the consolations you have received? You will then have new ones. For to him that has, will more be given, and to him that has not, but has lost it by his fault, will be taken away even what he has;<sup>2</sup> that is to say, he will be deprived of the gifts which were prepared for him. It is true, the rain revives plants which are green, but from those which are not, it takes away the life which they have not, for they rot altogether. In many such cases as these we love devout consolations and fall into dryness and barrenness of spirit. Let us examine, then, our conscience if we notice in ourselves any similar failings. But note, Philothea, that we must not make this examination with disquietude and too much curiosity. But after having faithfully considered our behaviour in this matter, if we find the cause of the evil in ourselves, we must thank God for it, for the evil

<sup>1</sup> St Luke i. 53, "Esurientes implevit bonis: et divites dimisit inanes."

<sup>2</sup> St Matt. xiii. 12, "Qui enim habet, dabitur ei, et abundabit: qui autem non habet, et quod habet auferetur."

is half cured when we have discovered its cause. If, on the contrary, you see nothing in particular which seems to you to have caused this dryness, do not busy yourself with a more curious research, but with all simplicity, without further examining anything specially, do what I shall tell you.

1. Humble yourself deeply before God in the knowledge of your nothingness and misery.<sup>1</sup> Alas! what am I, when I am by myself? Nothing else, O Lord, but a dry land, which, cracked in every part, shows the thirst<sup>2</sup> it has for the rain of heaven; and meanwhile the wind scatters it and reduces it to dust.

2. Call upon God and ask Him for His joy. "Grant me, O Lord, the joy of thy salvation."<sup>3</sup> "My Father, if it be possible, remove this cup from me."<sup>4</sup> Remove thyself from hence, O fruitless wind<sup>5</sup> that dries my soul, and come, O gracious wind of consolations, and blow in my garden, and its good affections will spread the odour of sweetness."<sup>6</sup>

3. Go to your confessor, open your heart to him, let him see thoroughly all the windings of your soul, take the counsel which he will give you with great simplicity and humility. For God, who has an infinite love of obedience, often renders useful the advice which we receive from another, and especially from the

<sup>1</sup> "Tâchez au contraire d'avoir toujours votre néant devant les yeux" ("Combat Spirituel," chap. lix.).

<sup>2</sup> Ps. cxlii. 6, "Anima mea sicut terra sine aqua tibi" (A.V., Ps. cxliii.).

<sup>3</sup> Ps. l. 14, "Redde mihi lætitiā salutaris tui" (A.V., Ps. li.).

<sup>4</sup> St Luke xxii. 42, "Pater, si vis, transfer calicem istum à me: verumtamen non mea voluntas sed tua fiat."

<sup>5</sup> "Bise."

<sup>6</sup> Cant. iv. 16, "Surge Aquilo, et veni Auster, perfla hortum meum et fluant aromata illius."

directors of souls, although otherwise there might not be any great likelihood in it; as indeed He made profitable to Naaman the waters of Jordan,<sup>1</sup> which, without any likelihood of human reason, Elisha had ordered him to use.<sup>2</sup>

4. But after all this, nothing is so useful, nothing is so fruitful in such dryness and barrenness as to be in no way addicted and attached to the desire of being delivered from it.<sup>3</sup> I do not say that we ought not to make some simple wish for deliverance, but I say we ought not to be attached to it, but rather to leave it to the pure mercy of the special providence of God, that so far as will be pleasing to Him He may make use of us amongst these thorns and amid these desires. Let us say, then, to God at such a time, "O Father, if it be possible, remove this cup from me." But let us add with great courage, "Nevertheless, not my will but Thine be done."<sup>4</sup> And let us rest in that with as much repose as we can. For God, seeing us in this holy indifference, will console us with many gifts and favours. So when He saw Abraham determined to deprive himself of his son Isaac, He was well pleased to see him indifferent in this firm resolution,

<sup>1</sup> 4 Kings (2 Kings) v. 14, "Descendit, et lavit in Jordane septies juxta sermonem viri Dei, et restituta est caro ejus, sicut caro pueri parvuli, et mundatus est."

<sup>2</sup> "Cachez au reste votre peine à tout autre qu'à votre Père spirituel, à qui vous devez la découvrir" ("Combat Spirituel," chap. lix.).

<sup>3</sup> "Lors donc que vous trouvez dans le dégoût et l'aridité, rentrez en vous-même, examinez quel est le défaut qui vous a fait perdre la dévotion sensible : corrigez-vous-en au plutôt, non pour recouvrer cette douceur qui s'est changée en amertume, mais pour bannir de votre âme tout ce qui n'est pas agréable à Dieu" ("Combat Spirituel," chap. lix.).

<sup>4</sup> St Matt. xxvi. 39, "Pater mi, si possibile est, transeat à me calix iste, verumtamen non sicut ego volo, sed sicut tu."

and consoled him with a most acceptable vision and by the sweetest blessings.<sup>1</sup> We ought, then, in all kinds of affliction, both bodily and spiritual, and in the distractions or deprivations of sensible devotion which happen to us, to say with all our heart and with profound submission: "The Lord hath given me consolations, the Lord hath taken them away; blessed be His holy Name."<sup>2</sup> For if we persevere in this humility He will give us such delicious favours as He gave to Job, who constantly used such words in all his consolations.

5. Finally, Philothea, amid all our dryness and barrenness, let us not lose courage, but waiting with patience the return of the consolations, let us always go on in our course, and not leave for that any exercise of devotion.<sup>3</sup> But rather, if it is possible, let us increase our good works, and as we cannot present to our dear Bridegroom sweets that we merit, let us present to Him those that are dry. For it is all one to Him, provided that the heart which offers to Him be perfectly steadfast in its wish to love Him. When the spring is fine, the bees make more honey and

<sup>1</sup> Gen. xxii. 16, 17, "Per memetipsum juravi, dicit Dominus: quia fecisti hanc rem, et non pepercisti filio tuo unigenito propter me. Benedicam tibi et multiplicabo semen tuum."

<sup>2</sup> Job i. 21, "Dominus dedit, Dominus abstulit: sit nomen Domini benedictum."

<sup>3</sup> "C'est encore une illusion dangereuse que celle où sont plusieurs femmes . . . s'il arrive que l'esprit immonde les tourmente par des pensées sales et abominables, et quelque fois même par des visions horribles, elles se troublent et perdent courage, croyant que Dieu les a délaissées, . . . Ainsi elles s'abandonnent à la tristesse, et tombent dans une espèce de désespoir, de sorte qu'à demi vaincues par la tentation, elles songent à quitter leurs exercices spirituels" ("Combat Spirituel," chap. lix.).

fewer young, because, being favoured by the fine weather, they are so occupied in gathering honey on the flowers that they forget the production of their nymphs.<sup>1</sup> But when the spring is hard and cloudy, they make more nymphs and less honey. For not being able to go out to gather honey, they employ themselves in establishing their numbers and increasing their race. It happens many times, dear Philothea, that the soul, when it finds itself in the beautiful spring-time of spiritual consolations occupies itself so much in gathering them and sucking in their sweetness that in the abundance of these sweet delights it practises far fewer good works. And on the contrary, amid the spiritual sharpness and barrenness, in proportion as it finds itself deprived of the agreeable feelings of devotion, it increases so much the more its solid works, and abounds in the inward production of the true virtues of patience, humility, humiliation, and of resignation, and the abnegation of self-love.

It is, then, a great mistake in many, and notably women, to believe that the service which we render to God, without relish, without tenderness of heart, and without feeling is less acceptable to His Divine Majesty, since, on the contrary, our actions are like roses, which, though they have more beauty when they are fresh, yet when dry they have more scent and strength. In the same way, although our works done with tenderness of heart are more agreeable to ourselves, to us, I say, who only look at our own pleasure, yet when done in dryness and barrenness they have more scent and value before God. Yes, dear Philothea, in times of dryness our will

<sup>1</sup> "Humido vere melior fœtus, sicco, mel copiosius" (Plin. Hist. Nat. xi. 18).

carries us to the service of God, as it were, by living force ; and consequently it must be more vigorous and constant than in times of tenderness. It is not so great a matter to serve a Prince in the sweetness of a time of peace and among the delights of the Court ; but to serve him in the roughness of war, amid troubles and persecutions, this is a true mark of constancy and faithfulness. The Blessed Angela of Foligno says that the most acceptable prize to God is that which is offered by force and constraint,<sup>1</sup> that is to say, that to which we give ourselves not by any relish that we have in it, nor by inclination, but purely to please God, and that to which our will brings us, as it were against the grain, forcing and violating the dryness and the repugnance which oppose themselves to it. I say the same of all kinds of good works. For the more contradictions we have, whether outward or inward, in doing them, the more they are valued and prized in the sight of God. The less there is of our particular interest in the pursuit of virtues, the more the proof of divine love shines in it. The child easily kisses his mother when she gives him sugar, but it is a sign that he loves her a great deal more if he kisses her after she has given him wormwood<sup>2</sup> and orpine.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> "Sed tunc fili mi est omnino gratissimum Deo ut acceptissimum sacrificium quando in subtractione gratiæ et fervoris orationem non dimittis" (Vita Arnaldi, c. xvii.).

<sup>2</sup> "Again wormwood voideth away the wormes of the guts, not only taken inwardly, but applied outwardly" (Gerarde, p. 938).

<sup>3</sup> "Chicotin : orpinè : Houseleeke ; wormegrass.—They are good against St Anthonie's fire, etc. Dioscorides teacheth that they likewise drive fourth wormes of the belly if they be drank with wine" (Gerarde, p. 412).

Houseleek is still said in Staffordshire to be good against fire.

## CHAPTER XV

*Confirmation and Illustration of what has been said by a  
Notable Example.*

BUT to make all this instruction clearer, I will place here an excellent passage from the life of St Bernard, as I have found it in a learned and judicious writer.<sup>1</sup> He says indeed thus: "It is an ordinary thing for nearly all those who begin to serve God, and who are not yet experienced in the deprivations of grace in spiritual vicissitudes, that when there fails to them the relish of sensible devotion and the agreeable light which invites them to hasten on the way of God, they lose their breath all at once, and fall into cowardice and sadness of heart. People of experience give as a reason for this that the reasonable nature cannot long endure being starved and deprived of any delight, either heavenly or earthly. Now, as souls lifted up above themselves by the experience of higher pleasures easily renounce visible objects, so, when by divine order spiritual joy is taken away from them, finding themselves also in other respects deprived of bodily consolations, and not being yet accustomed to await in patience the return of the true Sun, it seems to them that they are neither in heaven nor on earth, and that they are buried in perpetual night. So that like little babies who are weaned, when they have lost the breast they languish and moan, and become tiresome and troublesome, chiefly to themselves. This, then, happened on the journey in question to one of the company named Geoffrey of Peronne, lately dedi-

<sup>1</sup> Vita St Bern. Lib. iv., "auctore Gaufrido," chap. iii.  
16.

cated to the service of God.<sup>1</sup> He, becoming suddenly dry, and deprived of consolation, and overcome with inward darkness, began to call back to memory his worldly friends, his relations, and the fortune that he had just given up. In consequence of this he was assailed by so rude a temptation that, not being able to hide it in his behaviour, one of his most intimate friends perceived it, and having dexterously accosted him with gentle words, said to him secretly, 'What does this mean, Geoffrey? How is it that, contrary to your usual manner, you are so thoughtful and troubled?' Then Geoffrey replied with a deep sigh, 'Ah, my brother, never in my life shall I be joyful again.' The other, being moved to pity by these words, with brotherly zeal went at once and told all this to their common Father, St Bernard, who, seeing the danger, entered into a church near by to pray God for him, and Geoffrey, meanwhile, overcome by sadness, rested his head on a stone and fell asleep. But after a little while both arose, one from prayer with the grace he had asked for, the other from sleep with a face so smiling and so serene that his dear friend marvelled at so great and sudden a change, and could not refrain from reproaching him in a friendly way for what he had answered him a little while before. Then Geoffrey replied to him: 'If before I told thee that I should never again be joyful, now I assure thee that I shall never again be sad.'"

Such was the success of the temptation of this devout person. But notice in this narrative, Philothea—

1. That God usually gives some foretaste of the heavenly delight to those who enter on His service,

<sup>1</sup> He afterwards became Prior of Clairvaux, and died in 1146.

that He may draw them from earthly pleasures, and encourage them in the pursuit of divine love, just as a mother places honey on the end of the teat to entice and attract her child to the breast.

2. That it is nevertheless this good God who, according to His wise disposition, sometimes takes away from us the milk and the honey of consolation, that, by treating us in this way, we may learn to eat the dry and more solid bread of a vigorous devotion, practised under the test of distaste and temptations.

3. That sometimes very great storms arise amid this dryness and barrenness. And then we must steadily fight against the temptations, since they are not of God. But we must patiently suffer this dryness, since God has ordained it for our use.

4. That we are never to lose courage in our inward troubles, nor say, like the good Geoffrey, "I shall never be joyful again." For in the night we ought to await the light, and likewise in the brightest spiritual weather we can have, we ought not to say, "I shall never be troubled again." No, for as the wise man says, "In happy days we should remind ourselves of unhappiness,"<sup>1</sup> we ought to hope amid travail, and fear amid prosperity. And both in one and the other we should always humble ourselves.

5. That it is a sovereign remedy to disclose our evil to some spiritual friend who may be able to relieve us.

Lastly, in conclusion of this warning, which is so necessary, I remark that, as in all things so in this also, our good God and our enemy have contrary aims. For God wishes to lead us by them to a great purity of heart, to an entire renunciation of our self-interest in that which pertains to His service, and a perfect

<sup>1</sup> Job xvii, 12, "Post tenebras spero lucem."

abnegation of ourselves. But the evil one tries to employ his works to make us lose courage, to make us return to the side of sensual pleasures, and at length to make us troublesome to ourselves and to others, in fact, to decry and defame holy devotion. But if you observe the instructions thus given you, you will largely increase your perfection in the practice of these inward affections, in the matter of which I do not wish to make an end without saying to you in addition this word. Sometimes the distaste, the barrenness, and dryness come from the indisposition of the body, when by excess of watching, of work, of fasting, we are overcome with weariness, with drowsiness, with heaviness and other infirmities of the same kind; and these things, although they depend on the body, no less inconvenience the spirit by the close bond which there is between them. Now, on such occasions we must always remember to do some acts of virtue by means of our spirit and superior will. For although our whole soul seems asleep and overcome with drowsiness and weariness, yet the actions of our spirit are none the less very acceptable to God. And we can say in such times as these, as the sacred Bride did: "I sleep, but my heart is awake."<sup>1</sup> And as I said above, if there is less relish in work of this sort, there is nevertheless more merit and virtue. But the remedy in this case is to reinvigorate the body by some sort of lawful ease and recreation. Thus St Francis ordered his religious that they should be so temperate in their works as not to overcome the fervour of their spirit.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Cant. v. 2, "Ego dormio, et cor meum vigilat."

<sup>2</sup> "Docebat eos discretionem sequi ut aurigam virtutum, non eam quam caro suadet, sed quam Christus edocuit" (St Bonav. Legend. St Franc. chap. v.).

And in reference to this glorious father, he was once attacked and shaken with so profound a melancholy of spirit that he was not able to prevent himself from showing it in his behaviour. For if he wished to be in the company of his religious, he could not do so; if he wished to be separated from them, he was worse. Abstinence and hard treatment of the flesh wore him out, and prayer in no way relieved him. He was two years like this, so much so that he seemed to be altogether abandoned by God. But at last, after he had humbly suffered this rude tempest, the Saviour gave back to him in a moment a happy tranquillity.<sup>1</sup> This means that the greatest servants of God are subject to these shocks, and that the least ought not to be astonished if they meet with some themselves.

<sup>1</sup> "Sanctus Franciscus de Assisio per duos annos spiritali animæ desolatione afflictus fuit" (Bened. xiv. De Canonis. Elench. sanct. verb. St Franc.).

# THE FIFTH PART OF THE INTRODUCTION

CONTAINING

EXERCISES AND COUNSELS TO RENEW THE SOUL AND  
TO STRENGTHEN IT IN DEVOTION.

## CHAPTER I

*That we ought Each Year to renew our Good Resolutions  
by the Following Exercises.*

THE first point in these exercises is to recognise thoroughly their importance. Our human nature falls away easily from its good affections because of the frailty and evil inclinations of our flesh. These oppress the soul and draw it downwards so that it is only able to rise upwards by the vigorous force of resolution, just as birds fall suddenly to the earth if they do not increase the motions and strokes of their wings to maintain themselves in flight. For this reason, dear Philothea, you have need very often of reiterating and repeating the good resolutions that you have made to serve God, for fear that if you do not make them, you will fall back again into your first state, or rather, into a far worse state; for spiritual falls have this peculiarity, that they always precipitate us lower than the state in which we had mounted on high to devotion. There is no clock, however good it be, which does not need to be wound up or pulled up twice a day, in the morning and in the evening. And then, besides this, we ought at least once a year

to take it to pieces, so as to remove the rust which has formed in it, to reset parts which have been strained, and repair those which are worn. So he who has a true care of his heart ought to wind it up in God in the evening and in the morning, by the exercises which have been given above.<sup>1</sup> And besides this, he ought frequently to consider his state, to set it and fit it; and at least once a year he ought to take it to pieces, and look minutely at it, that is to say, at all its affections and passions, so as to repair all the faults which are in it. And just as the clock-maker oils the wheels, the springs, and the works of his clock with fine oil, so that the movements may take place more smoothly, and that it may not be subject to rust, so the devout person, after the practice of this examination of his heart, ought, if he wishes to renew it thoroughly, to anoint it with the Sacraments of Confession and the Eucharist.<sup>2</sup> This exercise will repair your forces when they are broken by time, will warm your heart, will make your good resolutions free again, and the virtues of your spirit to reblossom.

The ancient Christians practised it carefully on the anniversary of the Baptism of our Lord, on which day, as St Gregory, Bishop of Nazianzos says, they renewed the profession and the protestations which were made in this Sacrament.<sup>3</sup> Let us do the same, my dear Philothea, giving ourselves to the task quite willingly, and employing ourselves in it quite seriously.

Having then chosen a convenient time, according

<sup>1</sup> Part ii. chaps. x., xi.

<sup>2</sup> Part ii. chaps. xix., xx.

<sup>3</sup> "Nos autem hodie Christi baptismum honore compectamur, ac festum honeste celebremus non ventris deliciis operam dantes, sed spiritualiter nosipsos oblectantes" (St Greg. Naz. orat. xxxix.).

to the advice of your spiritual father, and withdrawing a little more into spiritual and real solitude than usual, you will make one, or two, or three meditations on the following points, according to the method which I have given you in the second part.<sup>1</sup>

## CHAPTER II

*Considerations of the Benefit which God confers upon us in calling us to His Service, according to the Declaration set forth above.*

1. **CONSIDER** the points of your declaration.<sup>2</sup> The first was to give up, reject, detest, and renounce for ever all mortal sin. The second was to dedicate and consecrate your soul, your heart, your body, with all that belongs to them, to the love and service of God. The third was, that if you should happen to fall into any evil action, you would rise from it at once by means of the grace of God. Are not these fair, just, worthy, and generous resolutions? Think carefully over in your soul, how holy, reasonable, and desirable this declaration is.

2. Consider to whom you have made this declaration, for it is to God. If our word, when it is reasonably given to men, strictly binds us, how much more that which we have given to God! "O Lord," said David, "it is Thou to whom my heart hath spoken it; my heart hath spoken this good word, never will I forget it."<sup>3</sup>

3. Consider in whose presence you made it! For it was in the sight of the whole Heavenly Court.

<sup>1</sup> Part ii. chaps. ii.-ix.

<sup>2</sup> Part i. chap. xx.

<sup>3</sup> Pss. xxvi. 8; xlv. 1, "Tibi dixit cor meum." "Eructavit cor meum verbum bonum" (A.V., Pss. xxvii., xlv.).

Alas! the holy Virgin, Joseph, your good Angel, St Louis, all this blessed company saw you and rejoiced over your words with sighs of joy and approbation, and saw with the eyes of love unspeakable, your heart prostrated at the feet of the Saviour, who was consecrating you to His service. There was special joy at this in the Heavenly Jerusalem, and now there will be the commemoration of it if, with a good heart, you renew your resolutions.

4. Consider by what means you made your declaration. Alas! how gentle and gracious God was to you at that time! But if you tell the truth, were you not invited by these gentle enticements of the Holy Spirit? The cords with which God drew your little bark to the port of salvation, were they not the cords of love and of charity?<sup>1</sup> How He enticed you with His divine sweetness, by the Sacraments, by reading, by prayer! Alas! dear Philothea, you were asleep, and God watched over you, and thought over your heart with thoughts of peace; He meditated for you with meditations of love.

5. Consider at what time God drew you to these important resolutions. It was in the flower of your age. Ah! what happiness to learn soon what we cannot know but too late! St Augustine, having been drawn Godwards at the age of thirty years, cried out: "O ancient beauty, how is it I have known Thee so late? Alas! I saw Thee, and did not think of Thee at all."<sup>2</sup> And you may well say, O ancient sweetness, why did I not taste Thee sooner? Alas! you

<sup>1</sup> Hos. xi. 4, "In funiculis Adam traham eos, in vinculis charitatis."

<sup>2</sup> "Sero te amavi, pulchritudo tam antiqua et tam nova, sero te amavi. Et ecce intus eras, et ego foris, et ibi te quærebam" (St Aug. Conf. x. 27, t. i. 184).

did not even yet deserve it. And the more you recognise what favour God has shown you by drawing you in your youth, say with David: "O my God, Thou hast enlightened me and touched me since my youth, and I will make known Thy mercy for ever."<sup>1</sup> But if this had been in your old age, alas! Philothea, what favour it is that, after you have thus abused the years which are past, God has called you before death, and that He has stayed the course of your misery at a time when, if it had continued, you would have been eternally miserable.

Consider the results of this calling! You will find, I think, within you some changes for the better if you compare what you are with what you were. Do you not take it at all as a happiness that you know how to speak to God by prayer? that you have the affection and the will to love Him? that you have stilled and pacified many of the passions which disturbed you? that you have avoided so many sins and embarrassments of conscience? and lastly, that you have communicated more frequently than you used to do, uniting yourself to this sovereign source of the eternal gifts of grace? Ah! how great these gifts are! You must, dear Philothea, weigh them with the weights of the sanctuary. It is the right hand of God which has done all this. "The good hand of God," said David, "has shown power, His right hand hath relieved me! Ah! I shall not die, but live, and declare with heart, and mouth, and works, the marvellous works of His goodness."<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Ps. lxx. 17, "Deus, docuisti me a juventa mea: et usque nunc pronuntiabo mirabilia tua" (A.V., Ps. lxxi.).

<sup>2</sup> Ps. cxvii. 16, 17, "Dextera Domini fecit virtutem: dextera Domini exultavit me, dextera Domini fecit virtutem. Non moriar sed vivam, et narrabo opera Domini" (A.V., Ps. cxviii.).

After all these considerations, which, as you see furnish an abundance of good affections, you must conclude simply by an act of thanksgiving, and a hearty prayer to use them well, retiring with humility and great confidence in God, deferring to make the effort of resolution till after the second point of this exercise.

### CHAPTER III

*Of the Examination of our Soul, on its Advancement in the Devout Life.*

THE second point of the exercise is a little long, and to practise it I will say to you that it is not requisite you should do it all at once, but at different times, taking, as it were, that which regards your behaviour towards God at one time, that which has to do with yourself at another time, that which concerns your neighbour at another, and the consideration of the passions on the fourth occasion. It is neither requisite nor expedient that you should make it on your knees, except at the beginning and at the end, when it embraces the affections. The other points of the examination you can make carefully while walking, and still more usefully in bed, if perchance you can be there some time without drowsiness and can keep awake. But to do this you must have read them over well before. Yet it is requisite to take the whole of this second point in three days and two nights at the most, setting aside about an hour each day and each night for them—such time, I mean, as you are able to give. For if this exercise were only made at times far distant one from the other, it would lose its force, and would give impressions of too weak a character. After each

point of examination, you will observe in what you find yourself to have failed, and what principal irregularities you have felt, so that you may declare them, and thus take counsel, resolution, and comfort of spirit concerning them. Although on the days when you make this exercise and the others, it is not requisite to make an absolute retreat from social intercourse, yet you ought to do it a little, especially towards the evening, that you may get to bed in better time, and take the rest of body and spirit necessary to its consideration. And during the day, you must make frequent aspirations to God, to our Lady, to the Angels, to the whole of the Heavenly Jerusalem. The whole ought also to be done with a heart in love with God and the perfection of your soul. To begin this exercise well:—

1. Place yourself in the presence of God. 2. Invoke the Holy Spirit, asking Him for light and clearness, that you may know yourself well, like St Augustine when he cried aloud before God in a spirit of humility: “O Lord, that I may know Thee, and that I may know myself;”<sup>1</sup> and St Francis, who asked God, saying: “Who art Thou, and who am I?”<sup>2</sup> Declare that you do not wish to observe your

<sup>1</sup> “Ecce quantum spatiatus sum in memoria mea, quærens te Domine, et non te inveni extra eam. . . . Ubi enim inveni veritatem, ibi inveni Deum meum ipsam veritatem quam ex quo didici non sum oblitus. Itaque ex quo didici te, manes in memoria mea, et illic te invenio, cum reminiscor tui et delector in te.” “Ubi ergo te inveni ut discerem te? Neque enim jam eras in memoria mea prius quam te discerem. Ubi ergo inveni te ut discerem te, nisi in te supra me?” (St Aug. Conf. x. 25, 26, t. i. 183).

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Corn. à Lap. in Ep. Jac. i. 16, “Sancti Francisci per noctes integras hæc una erat meditatio et oratio; Quis ego, Domine? Quis tu?”

progress so as to rejoice over it in yourself, but to rejoice in God, not to glorify yourself but to glorify God, and thank Him for it.

Declare that if, as you think you have profited little, or indeed have gone back, you will not for all that be at all disheartened or chilled by any sort of discouragement or relaxation of heart, but, on the contrary, will encourage yourself and take heart again, humble yourself, and remedy your faults by means of the grace of God.

That done, consider gently and quietly, as it were, up to the present how you have behaved yourself towards God, towards your neighbour, and with regard to yourself.

#### CHAPTER IV

##### *Examination of the State of our Soul towards God.*

**H**OW does your heart stand in regard to mortal sin? Have you a strong resolution never to commit it in respect of anything that can happen? And has this resolution lasted from your declaration until now? In this resolution consists the foundation of the spiritual life.

1. How does your heart stand in regard to the commandments of God? Do you find them good, easy, agreeable? Ah! my daughter, he who has his taste in good order and the stomach healthy, loves good meats and rejects the bad.

2. How does your heart stand in regard to venial sins? You may not always be on your guard against some of them, but is there not at least one for which you have a special inclination? and what is worse, is there not one for which you have affection and love?

3. How does your heart stand in regard to spiritual exercises? do you love them? do you value them? do they not worry you at all? are you at all disgusted with them? to which do you feel more or less inclined? To hear the word of God, to read it, to speak of it, to meditate, to aspire to God, to confess yourself, to take spiritual counsel, to prepare for the Communion, to communicate, to restrain the affections, what is there in these that is repugnant to your heart? And if you find something to which this heart of yours has less inclination, examine from whence this disgust comes, what is the cause of it.

4. How does your heart stand in regard to God Himself? Does your heart take pleasure in being mindful of God? Is there still any pleasant comfort from it? Ah! David saith: "I am mindful of God, and I take a delight therein."<sup>1</sup> Do you feel in your heart a certain facility to love Him and a particular relish to taste of this love? Is not your heart refreshed in thinking of the immensity of God, His goodness, His sweetness? If the remembrance of God happens to you amid the occupations of the world and its vanities, does it not make room for itself? Does it not take possession of your heart? Does it not seem to you that your heart turns towards Him, and in some way goes out to meet Him? There are certainly souls like this.

5. If the husband of a woman returns from afar, as soon as the woman knows of his return and hears his voice, though she be fully occupied, and kept back by some strong reason amid the press, yet her heart is not held back, but leaves other thoughts to think of

<sup>1</sup> Ps. lxxvi. 4, "Memor fui Dei, et delectatus sum" (A.V., Ps. lxxvii.).

her husband who has come. It is the same with souls who love God well. Although they may be engaged when the remembrance of God comes to them, they almost lose interest in everything else, for the gladness which they have in seeing this dear remembrance come back again. And it is an extremely good sign.

6. How does your heart stand in regard to Jesus Christ, God and man? does it please you to be near Him? Bees have pleasure in their honey, and wasps in their carrion. So good souls take their pleasure in Jesus Christ, and have the greatest tenderness of love towards Him. But the evil take pleasure in their vanities.

7. How does your heart stand in regard to our Lady, the Saints, and your good Angel? Do you love them dearly? Have you special trust in their goodwill? Their pictures, their lives, their praises, are they pleasing to you?

8. As to your tongue, how do you speak of God? Is it a pleasure to you to speak well of Him according to your condition and ability? Do you love to sing His praises?<sup>1</sup>

9. As to works, consider if you have at heart the outward glory of God, so as to do something for His honour. For those who love God, love together with God the adornment of His house. Can you observe that you have left any affection, and forsaken anything for God? for it is a good sign of love to deprive ourselves of something in favour of him whom we love. What have you then forsaken hitherto for the love of God?

<sup>1</sup> "Ses Cantiques."

## CHAPTER V

*Examination of your State as regards yourself.*

HOW do you love yourself? Do you not love yourself too much for this world? If that is so, you desire to remain here always and you will take the utmost care to establish yourself in this earth. But if you love yourself for heaven's sake, you desire, or at least you acquiesce gladly in giving up all that is here below at the time when it will be pleasing to our Lord.

2. Do you keep due order in the love of yourself. For it is only the inordinate love of ourselves which ruins us. Now, ordered love wishes us to love the soul more than the body, to have more care in acquiring virtues than anything else, to hold more account of heavenly honour than of honour which is base and transitory. The heart well ordered says more often to itself: "What will the angels say if I do such a thing?" and not: "What will men say?"

3. What love have you for your heart? Do you not trouble yourself at all to minister to it in its sickness? Alas! you owe it the care of helping it and procuring it help when its passions torment it, and of leaving all else for that.

4. What do you esteem yourself as before God? without doubt as nothing. Now, there is no great humility in a fly when it esteems itself as nothing in comparison with a mountain, nor in a drop of water when it holds itself as nothing in comparison with the sea, nor in a flake or spark of fire when it regards itself as nothing in respect of the sun. But humility consists in not in any way overestimating ourselves as

regards others, in not wishing to be overestimated by others. How do you stand in this matter?

5. As to your tongue, do you not boast of yourself one way or another? do you not flatter yourself at all when you speak of yourself?

6. As to your works, do you not take any pleasure contrary to your health? I mean vain, useless pleasure, too many long nights without cause, and such-like things?

## CHAPTER VI

### *Examination of the State of our Heart towards our Neighbours.*

WE ought, indeed, to love our husband and our wife with a gentle and quiet love, strong and constant, and this should be in the first place because God has ordered it and wishes it. I say the same of children and near relations, and even of friends, each according to his rank.

But to speak generally, how does your heart stand in regard to your neighbour? Do you love him really heartily, and for the love of God? Really to know this well, you ought indeed to fancy to yourself certain people who are troublesome and disagreeable. For it is then that we exercise the love of God towards our neighbour, and much more towards those who do us evil either in deed or in words. Look well if your heart is frank in this matter, and whether you have a great objection to love them.

Are you not ready to speak evil of your neighbour, specially of those whom you do not love? Do you not do evil to your neighbour either directly or indirectly?

However little reason you show, you will see it readily for yourself.

## CHAPTER VII

*Examination on the Affections of our Soul.*

I HAVE extended these points to some length, for in their examination consists the knowledge of the spiritual advancement that we have made. As to the examination of sins, it is for the confessions of those who do not think of advancing themselves.

We must not, however, make ourselves uneasy on any one of these articles, except quite quietly, considering in what state our heart has been with regard to them since our resolution, and what notable faults we have committed in them.

But to shorten the whole, we must reduce the examination to the scrutiny of our passions. And if it troubles us to think of them so much in detail, we can still examine ourselves as to what we have been, and how we have behaved—

In our love towards God, towards our neighbour, towards ourselves;

In our hatred of the sin which is in us, of the sin which is in others, for we ought to desire the extermination both of one and the other;

In our desires as regards property, as regards pleasures, as regards honours;

In the fear of the dangers of sinning, and of the loss of this world's goods: one we fear too much, and the other too little;

In our hope, which is set too much perhaps upon

the world and created things, and too little on God and things eternal ;

In the sorrow, if too excessive, for vain things ;

In the joy, if excessive, for things which are unworthy ;

What affections, lastly, hold our heart entangled ; what passions possess it ; by what it is chiefly led astray.

For by the passions of the soul we recognise its condition by trying them one after the other. As the player on a lute, touching all the chords, tunes those which he finds discordant, by tightening them or loosing them, so, after having tried the love, the hatred, the desire, the fear, the hope, the sorrow and the joy of our soul, if we find them out of tune with the air we wish to play, which is the glory of God, we shall be able to tune them by means of His grace, and the counsel of our spiritual father.

## CHAPTER VIII

*Affections which we must exercise after this Examination.*

AFTER having quietly considered each point of the examination, and seen how you stand as regards them, you will come to the acts of affection in this manner.

Thank God for what little amendment you will have found in your life since your resolution, and recognise that it has been His mercy only which has worked it within you and for you.

Humble yourself deeply before God, recognising that if you have not made much progress, it has been by your failures, because you have not faithfully, cour-

ageously, constantly, corresponded to the inspiration, enlightenment, and impulses He has given to you in prayer and otherwise.

Promise Him that you will praise Him for ever for the favours shown on your behalf, in drawing you back from your inclinations and leading you on towards the little amendment which you have made.

Ask His pardon for the unfaithfulness and disloyalty with which you have responded to His grace.

Offer Him your heart that He may be altogether Master of it.

Pray Him that He may make you altogether faithful.

Invoke the Saints, the holy Virgin, your Angel, your Patron, St Joseph, and others in like manner.

## CHAPTER IX

### *Of Considerations Suitable for renewing our Good Resolutions.*

**A**FTER having made the examination, and having conferred with some worthy director on your failures and their remedy, you will take the following considerations, making one of them each day by way of meditation, employing in it the time of your prayer, and always using the same method for the preparation and the affections which you have used at your meditations in the first part, placing yourself before all things in the presence of God, imploring His grace to establish you firmly in His holy love and service.

## CHAPTER X

*The First Consideration, of the Excellence of our Souls.*

CONSIDER the nobility and excellence of your soul, which has an understanding that knows not only all the visible world, but knows also that there are angels and a Paradise, knows that there is an all-sovereign God, most good and ineffable, knows that there is an eternity, and knows, moreover, what is suitable for living well in this visible world, for associating with the angels in Paradise, and for rejoicing in God eternally.

Your soul has, moreover, a will altogether noble, which can love God, and cannot hate Him of itself. Look at your heart, how generous it is; and just as nothing whatever of that which is corrupt can detain the bees, since they stop only on the flowers, so your heart cannot be at rest but in God alone, and no created thing can satisfy it. Look back boldly at the dearest and most violent attachments which have formerly occupied your heart, and judge in truth if they were not full of disquietude, vexed with smarting thoughts and troublesome cares, amidst which your poor heart was miserable!

Alas! our heart, when it runs after created things, pursues them with eagerness, thinking itself able to still its desires. But as soon as it has met them, it finds that it must all be done over again, and that nothing can content it. God does not wish that our heart should find any place on which it may repose, any more than the dove which was let out from the Ark of Noah,<sup>1</sup> but only that it may return to its God from whom

<sup>1</sup> Gen. viii. 9, "Quæ cum non invenisset ubi requiesceret pes ejus, reversa est ad eum in arcam."

it has gone forth. Ah! what beauty of nature there is in our heart; and why, then, do we hold it back against its will to serve created things?

O my beautiful soul, you ought to say, you are able to understand and to wish for God. Why do you interest yourself in anything less? You can aim at eternity. Why will you interest yourself in the moments of time? It was one of the regrets of the Prodigal Son that, having been able to live delicately at the table of his father, he was eating shamefully at that of beasts.<sup>1</sup> O my soul! Thou art capable of God; woe to thee, if thou art content with less than God. Raise your soul on high on this consideration, prove to it that it is eternal and worthy of eternity; fill it with courage for this end.

## CHAPTER XI

### *Second Consideration, of the Excellence of the Virtues.*

CONSIDER that the virtues and devotion alone can make your soul content in this world. You see how beautiful they are. Place side by side the virtues and the vices which are contrary to them. What sweetness there is in patience in comparison with vengeance; in gentleness in comparison with anger and grief; in humility in comparison with arrogance and ambition; in liberality in comparison with avarice; in charity in comparison with envy; in sobriety in comparison with disorder. The virtues have this that is admirable about them, that they delight the soul with matchless gentleness and sweetness after we have prac-

<sup>1</sup> St Luke xv. 16, "Et cupiebat implere ventrem suum de siliquis, quas porci manducabant; et nemo illi dabat."

tised them, whereas the vices leave it utterly jaded and wretched. Up, then ! why will we not undertake to acquire this sweetness !

Of the vices, he who has only a few is not content, and he who has many is discontented. But of the virtues, he who has only a few has always some contentment, and can always have more by going on. O devout life, how beautiful, how gentle, how pleasant, how sweet thou art ! Thou dost sooth our tribulations, and dost sweeten our consolations. Without thee good is evil and pleasures full of disquietude, trouble, and weakness ! Ah ! he who would know thee might well say with the woman of Samaria : “ Domine, da mihi hanc aquam,” Lord, give me this water ! <sup>1</sup> an aspiration frequently used by the Mother Teresa and by St Catherine of Genoa, though for different purposes.

## CHAPTER XII

### *Third Consideration, of the Example of the Saints.*

CONSIDER the example of the saints of all conditions. What have they not done to love God and to be devoted to Him ! Look at the martyrs, invincible in their resolutions. What torments have they not suffered to keep these resolutions ! But especially these beautiful and honorable women, whiter than the lily in purity, redder than the rose in charity, some at twelve, some at thirteen, fourteen, fifteen years, who have suffered a thousand kinds of martyrdom sooner than renounce their resolution ; not only in that which concerned the profession of faith, but in that which concerned the declaration of devotion. Some died rather

<sup>1</sup> St John iv. 15.

than give up their virginity, others rather than cease from ministering to the afflicted, from consoling the tormented, and from burying the dead. O God, what constancy has this weak sex shown in such like cares!

Look at the number of holy Confessors. With what force have they despised the world, how they have made themselves invincible in their resolutions! Nothing has been able to make them give them up. They have embraced them without reserve, and have kept them without exception. My God, what does St Augustine say of his mother, St Monica? With what firmness has she followed out her undertaking to serve God in her marriage, in her widowhood! <sup>1</sup> And St Jerome of his dear daughter Paula, among her many misfortunes, amid so great a variety of accidents? <sup>2</sup> But what shall we do with such excellent examples before us! They were as we are, they did it for the same God, for the same virtues. Why should we not do as much in our position, and according to our vocation, for our dear resolution, and holy declaration?

<sup>1</sup> "Illa famula tua, Deus noster, in Christo vivificata, sic vixit ut laudetur nomen tuum in fide moribusque ejus" (St Aug. Conf. ix. 13, t. i. 169).

<sup>2</sup> "Nullæ aliæ Romanæ urbi præbuere fabulam, nisi Paula et Melania, quæ contemptis facultatibus, pignoribusque desertis, crucem Domini quasi quoddam pietatis levavere vexillum" (St Jer. Ep. xxviii. ad Asellam. t. iv. part ii. p. 66).

## CHAPTER XIII

*Fourth Consideration, of the Love that Jesus Christ bears to us.*

CONSIDER the love with which Jesus Christ our Saviour has suffered so much in this world, and particularly in the olive-garden, and on the Mount of Calvary. This love concerned you, and by all these pains and works He obtained from God the Father good resolutions and declarations for your heart, and by the same means obtained also all that which is necessary to keep and nourish, to strengthen and fulfil these resolutions. O resolution! how precious thou art, being the daughter of such a mother, as the Passion of my Saviour! O how my soul ought to cherish thee, since thou hast been so dear to my Jesus! Alas! O Saviour of my soul, Thou didst die that I might gain my resolutions! Ah! Give me Thy grace that I die sooner than lose them!

Do you see, Philothea, it is certain that the heart of our dear Jesus saw yours from the tree of the Cross, and loved it, and by this love obtained for it all the good things you will ever have, and among others our resolutions. Yes, dear Philothea, we can all say, like Jeremiah, "O Lord, before I had my being Thou didst look upon me, and didst call me by my name,"<sup>1</sup> inasmuch as of a truth His divine goodness prepared in His love and mercy all the means, both general and particular, of our salvation, and consequently our resolutions. Yes, without doubt, just as a woman with child prepares the cradle, the linen, the swaddling-bands, and even a name for the child which she hopes to have,

<sup>1</sup> Jer. i. 5, "Priusquam te formarem in utero, novi te."

though it be not yet in the world, so our Lord having His goodness great with child of you, intending to bring you forth unto salvation and to make you his daughter, prepared on the tree of the Cross all that was necessary for you, your spiritual cradle, your linen, and swaddling-bands, your nurse, and all that was fitting for your happiness. These are all the means, all the allurements, all the gifts of grace with which He conducts your soul and wishes to draw it to His perfection.

Ah! my God. How deeply ought we to place this in our memory! Is it possible that I have been loved and so dearly loved by my Saviour that He has thought of me in particular, and of all those little circumstances by which He has drawn me to Him? How, then, ought we to love, and cherish, and indeed employ all this for our profit! This is indeed kind. This loving heart of my God thought upon Philothea, loved her, and procured for her a thousand means of salvation, as much as if there had not been another soul in the world upon which He had set His thought, just as the sun when it shines on one place of the earth does not shine on it less than if it shined nowhere else and shined upon this alone. For in the same way, our Lord thought and cared for all his dear children, so that He thought of each one of us as if He had had no thought for all the rest. "He hath loved me," says St Paul, "and hath given Himself for me,"<sup>1</sup> as if he said, for me alone, altogether as if He had done nothing for the rest. This, Philothea, ought to be graven in your soul, to cherish and nourish to the full your resolution, which has been so precious in the heart of the Saviour.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Gal. ii. 20, "Qui dilexit me, et tradidit semetipsum pro me."

<sup>2</sup> There is need of emphasising this true teaching of Predestination. "Predestination is the good purpose of God

## CHAPTER XIV

*Fifth Consideration, of the Eternal Love of God towards us.*

CONSIDER the eternal love which God has borne to you! For before our Lord Jesus Christ in so far as He was man suffered on the Cross for you, His Divine Majesty designed you in His sovereign goodness, and loved you most dearly. But when did He begin to love you? When He began to be God. And when did He begin to be God? Never, for He has always been so without beginning and without end. And so He has always loved you from eternity. This is why He prepared the graces and the favours which He has given to you. He says it by the Prophet: "I have loved thee" (He speaks to you as if indeed to no other) "with perpetual charity, and thus far have I drawn thee, in my mercy for thee."<sup>1</sup> He has then thought among other things to cause you to make resolutions to serve Him.

O God, what resolutions are these that God has thought, meditated, prepared from eternity! How very dear and precious they ought to be to us! What ought we to suffer sooner than depart from them a single

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to bring us from the life of nature, through a supernatural union with Christ by grace, to the life of glory. It is our Heavenly Father's good pleasure to give us Eternal Life in His kingdom. Predestination does not cause us to be saved mechanically, against our wills; it prepares for us a Christian course in life, in which all things that pertain to spiritual life and godliness are provided for us and placed within our reach" ("The Life of Grace," Canon Bodington, 1903, p. 16).

<sup>1</sup> Jer. xxxi. 3, "Et in charitate perpetua dilexi te: ideo attraxi te, miserans."

hair's-breadth ! No, not indeed if all the world were to perish. For even the whole world together is not worth one soul, and one soul is worth nothing without our resolutions.

## CHAPTER XV

*General Acts of Affection on the Foregoing Considerations, and the Conclusion of the Exercise.*

O DEAR resolutions, you are the beautiful tree of life which my God has planted with His hand in the midst of my heart, which my Saviour wishes to water with His blood to make it bear fruit ! Sooner a thousand deaths than permit any wind to tear you up. No, neither vanity, nor pleasures, nor riches, nor troubles shall ever tear up my purpose from me.

Alas ! Lord, but Thou hast planted it, and hast in Thy fatherly bosom guarded this beautiful tree eternally for my garden. Alas ! How many souls there are who have not been formed in this way ! And how, then, should I ever be able to humble myself sufficiently under Thy mercy ?

O beautiful and holy resolutions, if I keep you, you will keep me. If you live in my soul, my soul will live in you. Live, then, for ever, O resolutions that are eternal in the mercy of God ! Be ever with me and live eternally in me, that I may never abandon you.

After these acts of affection, you must consider, in particular, the means requisite for holding these dear resolutions, and you must declare that you wish faithfully to use them all—frequency of prayer, of Sacrament, of good works, the amendment of the faults recognised in the second point, the cutting off of occasions of evil,

the following of the counsels which will be given to you for this purpose.

And this being done, as it were, by retaking your breath and renewing your strength, declare a thousand times that you will continue in your resolutions. And as if you held your heart, your soul, and your will in your hands, dedicate it, consecrate it, sacrifice it, and offer it to God, declaring that you will never take it again, but will leave it in the hand of His divine Majesty, to follow in all things His commandments. Pray God that He will renew your strength, that He will bless the renewing of your declaration, and that He will strengthen it. Invoke the Virgin, your Angel, Saint Louis, and all the Saints.

Go in this emotion of your heart to the feet of your spiritual father, accuse yourself of the principal faults that you have observed you have committed since your general Confession, and receive the absolution in the same way as you did the first time; read over the declaration before him, and sign it.<sup>1</sup> And then at last go and unite your heart thus renewed to its Source and Saviour, to the most Blessed Sacrament of the Eucharist.

## CHAPTER XVI.

*Of the Sentiments we ought to keep after this Exercise.*

THE day that you have made this renewal of your declaration and the other things which follow, you ought very often to say over with heart and voice these burning words of St Augustine, of St Catherine of Genoa, and others: "No, I am no more my own:

<sup>1</sup> Part i, chap. xx.

whether I live or whether I die, I am my Saviour's" :<sup>1</sup> I have nothing more of myself, nor of mine ; myself, it is Jesus, mine it is to be his ! O world, thou art always thyself, and as for me I have always been myself. But for the future I will no more be myself. No ! we are no longer ourselves, for we have changed our heart. And the world which has so much deceived us will be deceived in us, for since it only knows of our change little by little, it will think that we are always as Esau, and will find us as Jacob.

All these exercises must repose in our heart, and putting aside consideration and meditation, we must go quietly into our affairs and our intercourse for fear lest the cordia of our resolutions should suddenly overflow ; for it must spread and penetrate thoroughly through all the parts of the soul, altogether without effort, either of spirit or of body.

## CHAPTER XVII

*Reply to Two Objections which can be made to this Introduction.*

THE world will say, my dear Philothea, that these exercises and these counsels are so many in number that he who wishes to observe them will not be able to attend to anything else. Alas ! dear Philothea, though we should do nothing else, we should do enough, since we should be doing what we ought to do in this world. But do you not see the snare ? If it were necessary to do all these exercises every day, of a truth it would

<sup>1</sup> Rom. xiv. 8, "Sive enim vivimus, Domino vivimus : sive morimur, Domino morimur. Sive ergo vivimus, sive morimur, Domini sumus."

occupy us altogether. But we are not required to do that, except from time to time, each one according to his opportunity. How many civil laws are there in the Digest and the Code which ought to be observed, but yet according to occasion, and not as if we should keep all of them every day? Moreover, King David, engaged in the most difficult affairs, practised many more exercises than I have set down for you. St Louis, a king admirable in war and in peace, who, with unequalled care, administered justice and handled his affairs, heard two Masses every day, said Vespers and Compline with his chaplain, made his meditation, visited the hospitals, confessed every Friday, and practised discipline on himself, heard frequently spiritual conferences, and with all this did not miss a single occasion of those public duties in outward things which he did and executed so diligently. And his Court was more splendid and more flourishing than it had ever been in the time of his predecessors. Do these exercises then boldly as I have set them out for you, and God will give you sufficient leisure and vigour to do all the rest of your affairs, yes, though He should stop the sun as He did in the time of Joshua.<sup>1</sup> We always do enough when God works with us.

The world will say that I assume throughout that my Philothea has the gift of mental Prayer, but that every one has not got it, and therefore this Introduction will not serve for all. It is true, without doubt, that I have presupposed it. And it is true also that every one has not this gift of mental prayer. But it is true also that nearly every one can have it, yes, even the rudest, provided they have good directors and that they will labour to acquire it as much as the

<sup>1</sup> Josh. x. 13, "Stetit itaque sol in medio cœli."

matter merits. And if it is found that they have not this gift in any sort of degree (which I think will happen very rarely), the wise spiritual father will gladly supply the defect by the attention with which he will instruct them either to read or to hear read<sup>1</sup> the same considerations which are set out in the meditations.

## CHAPTER XVIII

*Three Last and Principal Counsels for this Introduction.*

**RENEW** on the first day of every month the declaration which is in the first part,<sup>2</sup> after your meditation. And at all times declare that you wish to keep it, saying with David: "Never to all eternity shall I forget Thy acts of righteousness, O my God, for in them hast Thou quickened me."<sup>3</sup> And when you feel some disorder in your soul, take your declaration in hand, and prostrate yourself in a spirit of humility; read it aloud with all your heart, and you will find great relief.

Make open profession of your wish to be devout, I do not say of being devout, but of wishing to be so. And do not be ashamed of the ordinary and necessary actions which lead you to the love of God. Own boldly that you are trying to meditate, that you would sooner die than commit mortal sin, that you wish to frequent the Sacraments, and to follow the counsels

<sup>1</sup> "Que feront, répliquai-je, ceux qui ne savent pas lire? —Qu'ils se fassent lire, reprit-il par des personnes loyales et à qui elles aient confiance" ("L'Esprit," part xiv. § 16).

<sup>2</sup> Part i. chap. xx.

<sup>3</sup> Ps. cxviii. 93, "In æternum non obliviscar justificationes tuas; quia in ipsis vivificasti me" (A.V., Ps. cxix.).

of your director (though often it may not be necessary to mention his name, for several reasons) ; for this frankness in confessing that we wish to serve God, and that we have consecrated ourselves to His love with special affection, is very acceptable to His Divine Majesty, who does not wish in any way that we should be ashamed of Him or of His Cross. And then it puts a stop to many invitations which the world would wish to make to the contrary, and pledges our honour to follow it up. The philosophers proclaimed themselves as philosophers, that they might be allowed to live philosophically. And we ought also to see that we are recognised as desirous of devotion, that we may be allowed to live devoutly. But if any one says to you that we can live devoutly without the practice of these counsels and exercises, do not deny it, but reply quietly that your infirmity is so great that it requires more aid and help than others have need of.

Lastly, most dear Philothea, I adjure you by all that is sacred in heaven and in earth, by the baptism you have received, by the breasts which Jesus Christ has sucked, by the charitable heart with which He loves you, and by the bowels of the mercy in which you hope, continue and persevere in this blessed undertaking of the devout life. Our days flow on ; death is at the door. "The trumpet," says St Gregory Nazianzen, "sounds the retreat ; let each one prepare, for the judgment is near." The mother of St Symphorian, seeing that they were leading him to martyrdom, cried after him : "My son, my son, remember the life eternal ; look to heaven, and consider Him who reigns there ; the approaching end will soon terminate the brief course of this life."<sup>1</sup> Philo-

<sup>1</sup> "Nate, nate, Symphoriane, in mente habe Deum vivum. Sursum cor suspende, fili ; aspice illum qui regnat in cœlis.

thea, I say the same to you. Look to heaven, and do not leave it for the earth. Look to hell; do not cast yourself into it for the passing moments of time. Look to Jesus Christ; do not deny Him for the world. And when the labour of the devout life seems hard for you, sing with St Francis:—

“For all the blessings I await from Thee,  
The labour is but pastime unto me.”<sup>1</sup>

Glory be to Jesus, to whom, with the Father and the Holy Spirit, be honour and glory, now and always, and for ever and ever. Amen.

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Hodie tibi vita non tollitur, sed mutatur in melius. Hodie, nate, ad supernam vitam felici commutatione migrabis.”  
(Passio S. Symphor. (A.D. 180) chap. vii. ; Ruinart. Act. Sinc. p. 71).

<sup>1</sup> “A cause des biens que j’attends,  
Les travaux me sont passe-temps.”



## APPENDIX

THE translator had no opportunity of seeing the last great edition of the works of St Francis de Sales, by the Very Rev. Canon Mackay, O.S.B., until after he had completed his work. The "Introduction to the Devout Life" is printed as vol. iii. of this Annecy edition. The text is that of the definitive edition of 1619, a copy of which, in the possession of Dr A. Mercati, Librarian at the Vatican, he had the privilege of examining at Rome. In the forefront of vol. iii. is a facsimile of a page of the MS. preserved in the First Monastery of the Visitation at Annecy.

Canon Mackay, in his preface, examines the conditions under which the work was produced. The following short extracts express his opinion on the origin and development of the Introduction :—

"We do not hesitate to refute certain historians who say that it was composed, chiefly or even solely, at the request of Henri IV. This prince pressed him to consecrate his exceptional gifts to the aid of piety. The testimony of Deshayes is strong, but not sufficient to prove that the first idea of the Introduction was inspired by Henri IV., or composed at his command. Would St Francis have waited six years before fulfilling it? Yet the work may have stimulated the zeal of St Francis."

"Nor can it be admitted that the relations of the Saint with Mme. de Chamoisy and the pressure placed

on him by Father Fourrier were the principal cause of the publication of the Introduction. What he says in a letter to the Archbishop of Vienne in 1609 is only the effect of a humble habit of attributing to the suggestion of another every enterprise which was capable of turning to his praise."

The threefold division of the First Edition corresponds with the three stages in its composition—1604-1607, 1607, and 1608.

The following collation of the *Editio Princeps* is due to the kind co-operation of the Rev. W. Benson Wright. The comparison is with the Edition of 1619.

#### EDITIO PRINCEPS, PART I.

Ch. i. = Pt. i. ch. i.	Ch. xi. = Pt. ii. ch. iii.
Ch. ii. = Pt. i. ch. ii.	Ch. xii. = Pt. ii. ch. iv.
Ch. iii. = Pt. i. ch. iii.	Ch. xiii. = Pt. ii. ch. v.
Ch. iv. = Pt. i. ch. iv.	Ch. xiv. = Pt. ii. ch. vi. <i>a</i> <sup>2</sup>
Ch. v. = Pt. i. ch. v.	Ch. xv. = Pt. ii. ch. vi. <i>b</i> <sup>3</sup>
Ch. vi. = Pt. i. ch. vi.	Ch. xvi. = Pt. ii. ch. vii.
Ch. vii. = Pt. i. ch. vii.	Ch. xvii. = Pt. ii. ch. viii.
Ch. viii. = Pt. i. ch. viii.	Ch. xviii. = Pt. ii. ch. ix.
Ch. ix. <sup>1</sup> = Pt. i. chs. ix.-xviii.	Ch. xix. = Pt. i. ch. xix.
Ch. x. = Pt. ii. ch. ii.	Ch. xx. = Pt. i. ch. xx.
Ch. xxi. = Pt. i. ch. xxi. <sup>4</sup>	

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<sup>1</sup> Dix briefves meditations propres pour l'entière purgation du cœur.

<sup>2</sup> Des affections.

<sup>3</sup> Des resolutions.

<sup>4</sup> Conclusion de ceste premiere partie et devote façon de recevoir l'Absolution.

EDITIO PRINCEPS, PART II.<sup>1</sup>

Ch. i. = Pt. iv. ch. i.	Ch. xvi. <sup>6</sup> = Pt. iii. ch. xi. <i>a</i> <sup>7</sup>
Ch. ii. = Pt. iv. ch. ii.	Ch. xvii. <sup>8</sup> = Pt. iii. ch. xi. <i>b</i> <sup>9</sup>
Ch. iii. = Pt. i. ch. xxii.	Ch. xviii. <sup>10</sup> = Pt. iii. ch.
Ch. iv. = Pt. i. ch. xxiii.	xii. <i>a</i> <sup>11</sup>
Ch. v. = Pt. i. ch. xxiv.	Ch. xix. = Pt. iii. ch. xiii.
Ch. vi. = Pt. ii. ch. i.	Ch. xx. = Pt. iii. ch. xiv.
Ch. vii. = Pt. ii. ch. x.	Ch. xxi. = Pt. iii. ch. xv.
Ch. viii. = Pt. ii. ch. xi.	Ch. xxii. = Pt. iii. ch. xvi.
Ch. ix. <sup>2</sup> = Pt. ii. chs. xii.,	Ch. xxiii. = Pt. iii. ch. xxv. <sup>12</sup>
xiii. <sup>3</sup>	Ch. xxiv. = Pt. iii. ch. xxiv. <i>a</i> <sup>13</sup>
Ch. x. = Pt. ii. ch. xiv.	Ch. xxv. = Pt. iii. ch. xxiv. <i>b</i> <sup>14</sup>
Ch. xi. = Pt. ii. ch. xv.	Ch. xxvi. <sup>15</sup> = Pt. iii. ch. xxvii. <i>a</i>
Ch. xii. = Pt. ii. ch. xvi.	Ch. xxvii. <sup>16</sup> = absent.
Ch. xiii. = Pt. ii. ch. xix.	Ch. xxviii. <sup>17</sup> = Pt. iii. ch.
Ch. xiv. = Pt. ii. ch. xx. <i>a</i> <sup>4</sup>	xxix. pt.
Ch. xv. = Pt. ii. chs. xx. <i>b</i> <sup>5</sup> ,	Ch. xxix. = Pt. iii. ch. xxx.
xxi.	Ch. xxx. = Pt. iii. ch. xxxi.

<sup>1</sup> Seconde Partie de l'Introduction, contenant divers Avis propres pour la conduite de l'Ame au Chemin de la sainte devotion depuis qu'elle y est entrée.

<sup>2</sup> "Des oraisons jaculatoires et de la retraite spirituelle."

<sup>3</sup> These two chapters were confounded in later editions.

<sup>4</sup> The chapter ends with "vomissement."

<sup>5</sup> The chapter begins with "Pour communier."

<sup>6</sup> "Des trois grandes vertus propres pour acquerir la perfection."

<sup>7</sup> The chapter ends with "façon."

<sup>8</sup> "De l'obeissance."

<sup>9</sup> The chapter begins with: "Il y a deux sortes l'obeissance."

<sup>10</sup> "De la chastete, qu'il la faut observer."

<sup>11</sup> The chapter ends with "esprit."

<sup>12</sup> The chapter ends: "trop peu."

<sup>13</sup> The chapter ends: "joyes sottes et insolentes."

<sup>14</sup> The chapter begins: "Mais toujours outre la solitude mentale."

<sup>15</sup> "Du parler et premièrement de l'honesteté et respect qu'on doit au prochain."

<sup>16</sup> This chapter, "des Injures," was never reprinted in subsequent editions.

<sup>17</sup> The chapter "de la Medisance" is very short in Editio Princeps.

Ch. xxxi. = Pt. iii. ch. xxxiii.	Ch. xlii. = Pt. ii. ch. xvii.
Ch. xxxii. = Pt. iii. ch. xxxii.	Ch. xliii. <sup>6</sup> = Pt. iii. ch. xxvi.
Ch. xxxiii. = Pt. iii. ch. xxxiv. <sup>1</sup>	Ch. xliv. = Pt. iii. ch. xxxv.
Ch. xxxiv. <sup>2</sup> = Pt. iii. ch. xxxvii. <i>b</i>	Ch. xlv. = Pt. iv. ch. viii.
Ch. xxxv. = Pt. iii. ch. xvii.	Ch. xlvi. = Pt. ii. ch. xviii.
Ch. xxxvi. <sup>3</sup> = Pt. iii. ch. xix.	Ch. xlvii. = Pt. iv. ch. iii.
Ch. xxxvii. = Pt. iii. ch. xx. <i>a</i> <sup>4</sup>	Ch. xlviii. — Pt. iv. ch. iv.
Ch. xxxviii. = Pt. iii. ch. xxxvii.	Ch. xlix. = Pt. iv. ch. v.
Ch. xxxix. = Pt. iii. ch. xxxvi.	Ch. l. = Pt. iv. ch. vi.
Ch. xl. = Pt. iv. ch. xi. <sup>5</sup>	Ch. li. = Pt. iv. ch. vii.
Ch. xli. = Pt. iv. ch. xii.	Ch. lii. Pt. iv. ch. ix.
	Ch. liii. = Pt. iv. ch. x.
	Ch. liv. = Pt. iii. ch. viii.
	Ch. lv. = Pt. iii. ch. ix.
	Ch. lvi. <sup>7</sup> = Pt. iii. ch. iii.
	Ch. lvii. = Pt. iii. ch. x.

## EDITIO PRINCEPS, PART III.

Ch. i. = Pt. v. ch. i.	Ch. x. = Pt. v. ch. x.
Ch. ii. = Pt. v. ch. ii.	Ch. xi. = Pt. v. ch. xi.
Ch. iii. = Pt. v. ch. iii.	Ch. xii. = Pt. v. ch. xii.
Ch. iv. = Pt. v. ch. iv.	Ch. xiii. = Pt. v. ch. xiii.
Ch. v. = Pt. v. ch. v.	Ch. xiv. = Pt. v. ch. xiv.
Ch. vi. = Pt. v. ch. vi.	Ch. xv. = Pt. v. ch. xv.
Ch. vii. = Pt. v. ch. vii.	Ch. xvi. = Pt. v. ch. xvi.
Ch. viii. = Pt. v. ch. viii.	Ch. xvii. = Pt. v. ch. xvii.
Ch. ix. = Pt. v. ch. ix.	Ch. xviii. = Pt. v. ch. xviii.

The following chapters in the Second Edition, and the definitive edition of 1619, are absent from the first edition:—

<sup>1</sup> The chapter ends: "l'accepta."

<sup>2</sup> "Des jeux de paroles."

<sup>3</sup> Shorter than in later editions.

<sup>4</sup> The chapter ends: "Des vrayes raisons"—shorter than in later edition.

<sup>5</sup> The chapter ends: "le remede des remedes."

<sup>6</sup> The chapter begins: "Mais parlez toujours de Dieu."

<sup>7</sup> The chapter ends with "souffert pour vous."

- Pt. iii. chs. i., ii. Introductory chapters on Virtue.  
 Pt. iii. chs. iv.-vii. The chapters on Humility.  
 Pt. iii. ch. xviii. Des Amourettes.  
 Pt. iii. chs. xxi., xxii. Counsels on Friendship.  
 Pt. iii. ch. xxiii. Des Exercices de la Mortification  
 exterieure.  
 Pt. iii. ch. xxviii. Des jugemens téméraires.  
 Pt. iii. chs. xxxviii.-xli. The supplementary chapters  
 on Chastity.  
 Pt. iv. chs. xiii.-xv. Chapters on Spiritual Consolation.

The translator wishes to express his thanks to the Rev. E. H. Nash for his assistance in the preparation and revision of proofs.

The following editions, not mentioned in the Bibliographical Note, were examined in the Library of the Benedictine monastery of Kremsmünster, in Austria, by the kindness of the librarian, Dom Sebastien, Magr. The Latin edition, published at Linz on the Danube, points to its use among the clergy and in the religious houses of the district.

- (1) 1637. Paris. Henault.
- (2) 1667. Roma. "Introduttione alla Vita divota."
- (3) 1698. Lincii. "Introductio ad vitam devotam."
- (4) 1713. Lyon. "Nouvelle édition par Jean Brignon de la Compagnie de Jésus . . . à l'usage des Personnes peu accoutumées au vieux langage." The passage in Pt. ii. ch. xvi. has been changed and modified.
- (5) 1769. Augsburg and Innsbruck. "Philothea, oder 'Je länger je lieber,' das ist, Einleitung zum andächtigen Leben."

One of the most curious editions the translator has noticed is a little volume entitled :

Philothea

or

Hints to Young Christians.

These hints are selected, principally, from  
the work of a Swiss divine of the

Seventeenth Century ;

and now, by the Compiler, affectionately offered  
to the consideration of those

Young Friends

who

“ Ask the way to Zion with their faces thitherward.”

London

Printed for the Compiler, and published by J. Bennett.

1829.

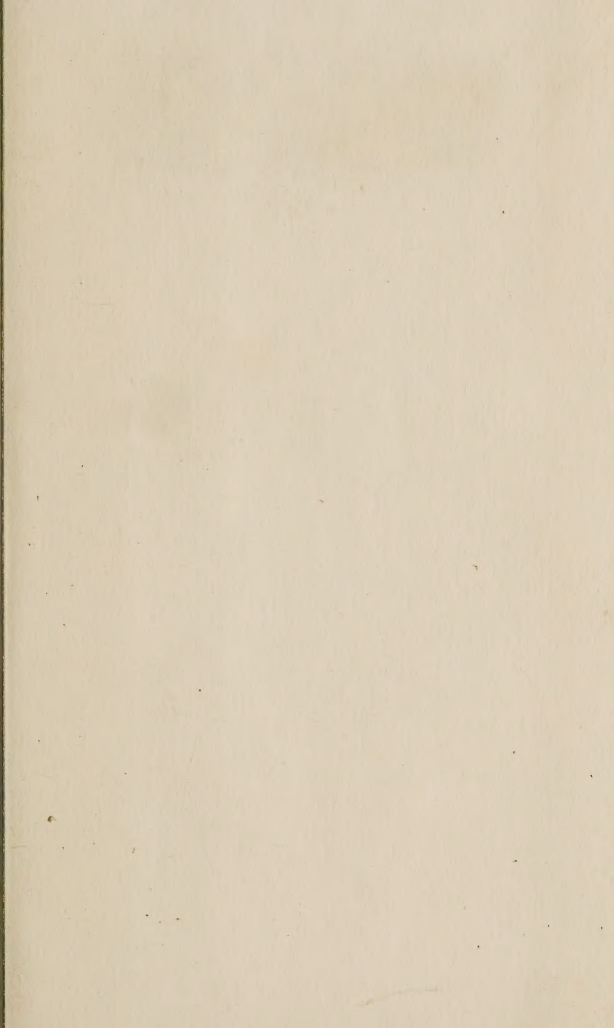
The work is a literary and theological curiosity. St Francis is introduced as a Swiss Divine ! All references to the Blessed Sacrament and the Spiritual Discipline of the Church are omitted. The book opens with the Meditations. There are chapters on Prayer and Meditation, mainly from St Francis, and on the observance of the Sabbath and the study of Holy Scripture from the writings of Dr Sherlock, Bishop Burgess, and Luther. The counsels and instructions on temptation, on spiritual consolations, and lethargy are included. The little book breathes a spirit of devotion, but lacks the sacramental touch which is so necessary to keep alive the true grace of devotion. It is indeed a curious and possibly unique edition of the Philothea.

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